4
SUZUKA
KOUJI SEO

SUZUKA

Kouji Seo

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY
David Ury

LETTERED BY
North Market Street Graphics

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Suzuka 4

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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A Note from the Author

LATELY I'VE BEEN SO DAMNED BUSY THAT I NEVER ACTUALLY GO TO SLEEP. I JUST PASS OUT! I NEVER EVEN MAKE IT TO MY FUTON. THAT KIND OF MAKES ME SOUND LIKE I'M A BUSY, BESTSELLING AUTHOR OR SOMETHING, BUT THE TRUTH IS, I'M JUST ALWAYS LATE FOR MY DEADLINES.

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san." It is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/
Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute,* it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

SUZUKA

4

Kouji Seo

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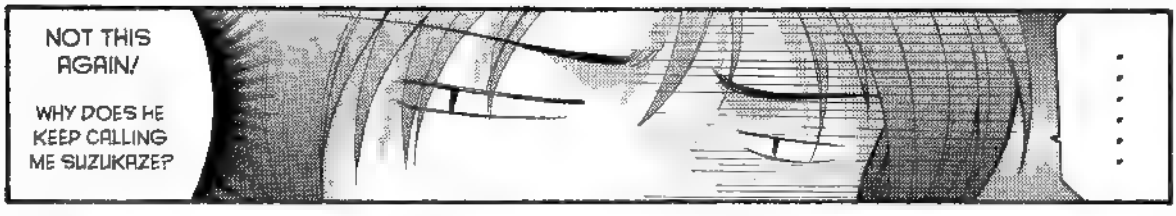
SUZUKA

#23 KAZUKI

THREE YEARS EARLIER.
SEPTEMBER.
NAGISA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
STARTING TOMORROW I'LL HAVE TO DEVOTE ALL MY TIME TO STUDYING FOR THE ENTRANCE EXAMS.
THANKS.
WELL, I JUST WANTED TO SAY THAT YOU'VE BEEN A GREAT CAPTAIN, SENPAI.
LUCKILY I'VE GOT SOME DEPENDABLE PEOPLE LIKE YOU AROUND. I KNOW I'M LEAVING THE TEAM IN GOOD HANDS.
I WANT YOU TO LEAD THE HIGH JUMPERS.
YES, SIR.
H-1
H-3
HUH?
HMMPH.
WHAT? SHE'S NOT READY YET, SENPAI.
SUZUKA ASAHINA
SEVENTH GRADE
(AGE THIRTEEN)

SUZUKAZE CAN'T HANDLE THE PRESSURE.
IF YOU PUT HER IN CHARGE, THE WHOLE TEAM WILL FALL APART.
KAZUKI TSUDA EIGHTH GRADER (AGE FOURTEEN)


NOT THIS AGAIN!
WHY DOES HE KEEP CALLING ME SUZUKAZE?
.....

FWICK
ヒュッ
THIS LOSER...?
THAT'S JUST WRONG!
I MEAN WHY SHOULD THIS LOSER BE CAPTAIN? WHAT ABOUT MIYAMOTO-SENPAI?

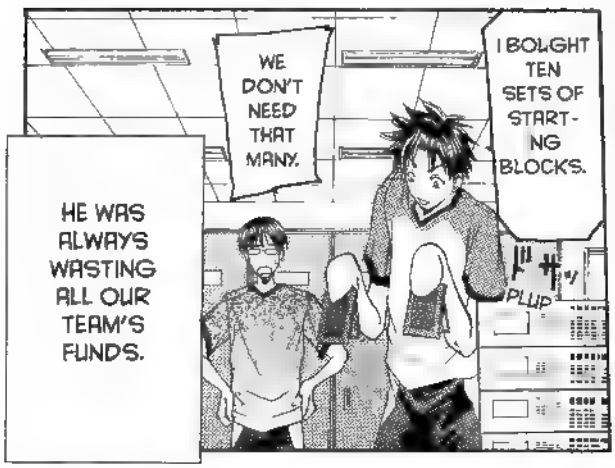
WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT IT, TSUDA-SENPAI? WHY DON'T YOU JUST STICK TO SPRINTING?
HEY, I'M THE TEAM CAPTAIN NOW!

YOU KNOW THAT, SUZUKA.
ON THIS TEAM, WE MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON ACHIEVEMENT.

OF ALL OUR SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADERS, TSUDA WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO MADE IT TO THE NATIONALS.
.....
I'D SAY HE DESERVES TO BE CAPTAIN.
A LITTLE BEAN SPROUT LIKE MIYAMOTO COULD NEVER HANDLE IT.
BEAN SPROUT.
THAT'S RIGHT
YOU DIDN'T EVEN MAKE IT PAST THE PREFECTURAL MEET, SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT?
WHATEVER, TSUDA-SENPAI. DIDN'T YOU PRACTICALLY FINISH LAST N THE NATIONALS?
SHUT UP.
WELL, STARTING TOMOR-ROW, YOU TWO BET-TER LEARN TO GET ALONG.
WHY DON'T YOU QUIT FIGHTING AND TRY WORKING TOGETHER FOR A CHANGE?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT US!
RIGHT, SUZU-KAZE?
MY NAME IS SU-ZUKA!
GOD! DOES HE EVER QUIT?

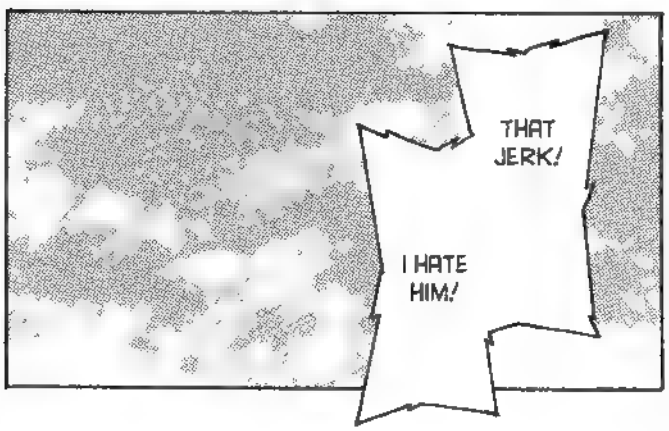
THE FOLLOWING DAY
WOO
WOO
COME ON! PRACTICE IS SUPPOSED TO BE FUN.
QUIT BEING SUCH A HARD-ASS!
I DON'T SEE WHAT BUSINESS IT IS OF YOURS!
MAYBE YOU SHOULD TRY TAKING PRACTICE A LITTLE MORE SERIOUSLY, SENPAI?
MAN, THOSE TWO REALLY DON'T GET ALONG.
IT'S EVEN WORSE NOW THAT ALL THE NINTH GRADERS ARE GONE.
DO SOMETHING, MIYAMOTO.
IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
THEY'VE JUST GOT DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT WHAT A TRACK TEAM SHOULD BE. DEBATE IS HEALTHY.
HEY, MIYAMOTO! IS SHE CRAZY OR WHAT?
HE'S THE CRAZY ONE, RIGHT, SENPAI?
SORRY, I'M JUST AN IMPARTIAL OBSERVER.
YEAH, RIGHT.
YOU'RE JUST AFRAID OF CONFRONTATION.

HE ARGUED...
WHY THE HELL DOES HE HAVE TO BE CAPTAIN?
GOD, HE REALLY PISSES ME OFF!


HE WAS ALWAYS WASTING ALL OUR TEAM'S FUNDS.
WE DON'T NEED THAT MANY.
I BOUGHT TEN SETS OF START-NG BLOCKS.
PLUP

THEY'RE BETTER BOILED.
SAU-SAGES ARE MEANT TO BE GRILLED.
...WITH ME ABOUT EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN.

...MAKE IT PAST THE PRE-FECTURAL MEET.
A PEN...
BUT STILL COULDN'T...
PRIZE
10


THAT JERK!
I HATE HIM!

HE ACTED LIKE SUCH A BIG SHOT JUST BECAUSE HE WAS FASTER THAN ANY-ONE ELSE ON THE TEAM.
HE MADE IT TO THE WINTER FINALS AGAIN IN EIGHTH GRADE.
1

NATIONAL JUNIOR HIGH TRACK AND FIELD COMPETITION- KANAGAWA PREFECTURE PRELIMINARY
THEN I STARTED EIGHTH GRADE. IT WAS THE DAY OF THE SUMMER COMPETITION...

...CAN PROBABLY MAKE IT TO THE NATIONALS.
BUT YOU AND ASAHINA...

SO IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S JUST ME, MIYAMOTO, AND SUZUKAZE IN THE PREFECTURIAL PRELIMS...
...AGAIN THIS YEAR.
.....
GOOD WORK, BERN SPROUT.
I BARELY EVEN QUALIFIED.
UH...

OH YEAH? WHAT DO YOU KNOW, SENPAI?
WELL, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO, BUT SHE NEVER WILL.

.....
I'VE SAID IT ONCE AND I'LL SAY IT AGAIN...
YOU ALWAYS CRACK UNDER PRESSURE. YOU GET SO NERVOUS THAT YOU JUST LOSE CONTROL.
THAT'S WHY YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT.

CLINK
WOO
WOO
AH, SORRY!
HEY, GET OUT OF THE WAY!
WOO
MY TIMING WAS TOTALLY OFF.
AND MY FORM WAS ALL OVER THE PLACE.
I'M THE ONLY HIGH JUMPER REPRESENTING MY SCHOOL, AND THIS IS THE BEST I CAN DO?
THAT'S THE SECOND MISS FOR NUMBER 16!
HAHH
HAHH
16

I GUESS KAZUKI WAS RIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE ASAHINA WON'T MAKE IT PAST THE PRELIMINARIES.
AND NOW FOR NUMBER 16'S THIRD ATTEMPT.
TH-THIS IS MY LAST CHANCE. IF I MISS THIS ONE, IT ALL ENDS HERE. NO CHANCE AT THE FINALS. NO NEW RECORDS.
THUMP THUMP
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
THAT'S WHY YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT.
I KNOW!
BUT... I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING.
OKAY.
HEY, SUZUKAZE!
SHIVER
?

PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!
YOU CLEAR THAT HEIGHT IN PRACTICE EVERY DAY!
1
10
12

ONE, TWO. ONE, TWO.
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
HEY, JUST FOLLOW MY RHYTHM!
1

TSU-TSUDA-SENPAI...
BERTS ME...
WHAT'S WITH HER?
3

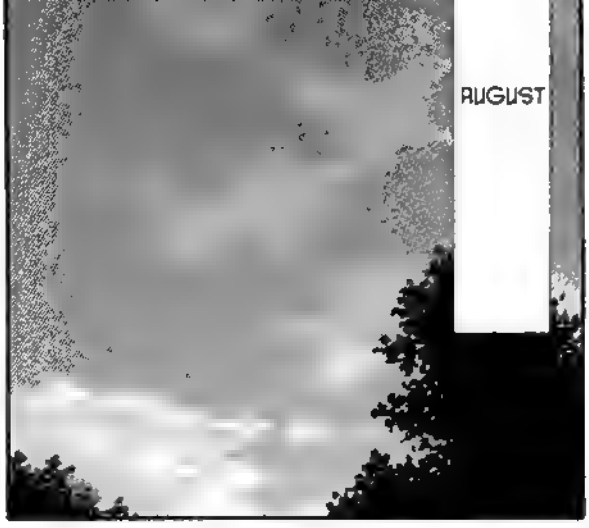
UH, SORRY.
HEY! YOU WANT ME TO D S-QUALIFY YOU?
1

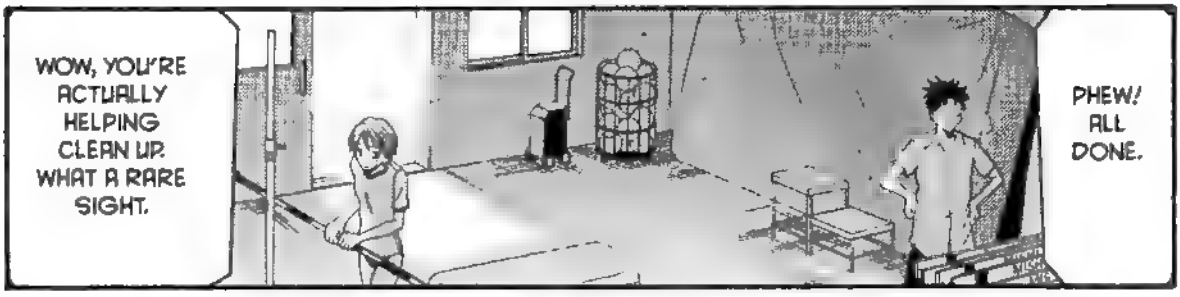
KNOCK IT OFF! YOU'RE EMBAR-RASSING ME.
QUIT IT!
HUH?
1

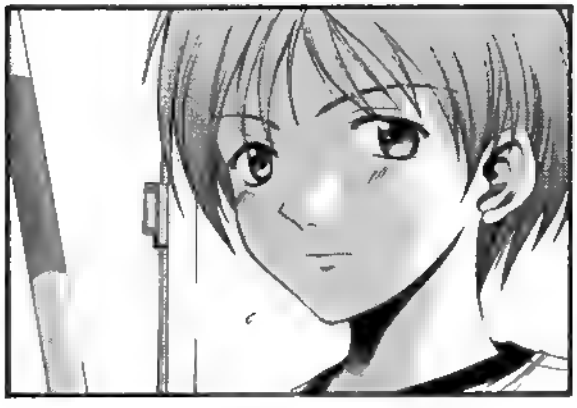
GOD, HE'S SUCH AN IDIOT.
!!
!!
OKAY!
16
HURRY IT UP, NUMBER 16!
I DON'T NEED YOUR HELP. I CAN HANDLE THIS.
FWOOSH
16
NUMBER 16...
...HAS CLEARED THE BAR!
WOO HOO

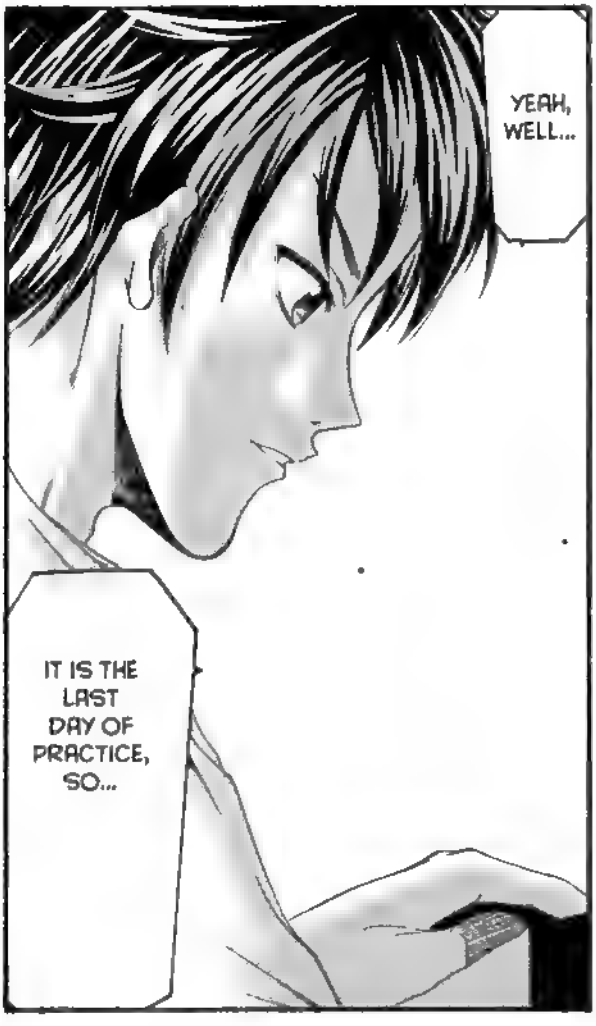
OR THE PICTURE WILL LOOK WEIRD.
GET CLOSER, YOU GUYS!
QUIT BEING A BABY!
BUT...
SUMMER WAS NEARLY OVER.
.....!!
YANK
I ENDED UP TAKING SIXTH PLACE.
CLICK
TSUDA-SENPAI RAN THE 100-METER DASH IN 10.82 SECONDS.
HE WAS HEADED FOR THE FINALS, BUT HE'D ALREADY BROKEN THAT YEAR'S NATIONAL RECORD WITH HIS TIME.
1

CLANK
OOF.
MISHI


AUGUST


WOW, YOU'RE ACTUALLY HELPING CLEAN UP. WHAT A RARE SIGHT.
PHEW! ALL DONE.




YEAH, WELL...
IT IS THE LAST DAY OF PRACTICE, SO...

OF COURSE... WE STILL HAVE THE NATIONALS TOMORROW.
THIS WILL BE MY LAST TIME AT THE NATIONALS, SO I HAVE TO TAKE FIRST PLACE.

I-I MEAN, YOU ALREADY HOLD THIS YEAR'S RECORD.
NO ONE CAN EVEN COME CLOSE TO YOUR TIME.
STEP
HUH?
I'M SURE...
...YOU WILL, SENPAI.
I MEAN, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE NATIONALS.
YEAH, BUT YOU CAN'T DEPEND ON NUMBERS AT A TIME LIKE THIS.
THE TRUTH IS, THE MOMENT I SET FOOT IN THE STADIUM, MY LEGS START SHAKING LIKE CRAZY.
I JUST GET THIS SUDDEN URGE TO RUN AWAY.
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
HUH?
I KNOW I ALWAYS MAKE FUN OF YOU FOR LOSING YOUR COOL, BUT...

REALLY?
RE...
.....
YOU MEAN...YOU FEEL THAT WAY, TOO, SENPAI?
OF COURSE I DO. WHAT DO YOU THINK I AM...A SUPER-HERO?
I-I DID THE BEST I COULD!
THAT WAS A NEW RECORD FOR ME!
THUNK
THAT'S WHY I WAS OUT THERE TRYING TO GIVE YOU SUPPORT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU ONLY CAME IN SIXTH.
WHY? SO YOU COULD HAVE ME AROUND TO PICK ON?
WITH YOU?
I WAS HOPING YOU'D BE AT THE FINALS WITH ME.
SIGH
HUH?
SUZUKA?
HEY, SUZUKA.

WHA-?

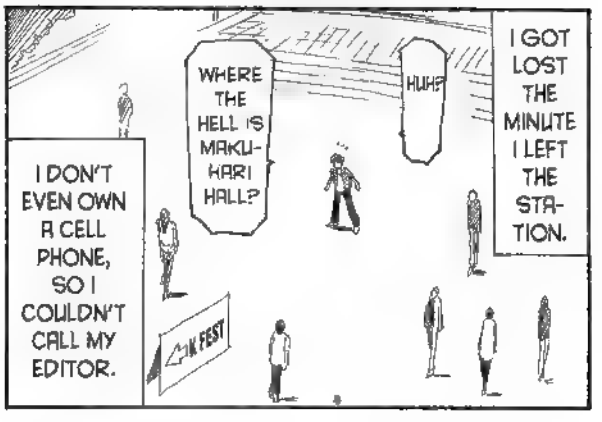
I'M SORRY FOR THE WAY I'VE BEEN ACTING.
I ONLY MEANT TO GIVE YOU ADVICE, BUT...
IT JUST NEVER CAME OUT RIGHT.

I'VE ALWAYS...
...LOVED YOU...

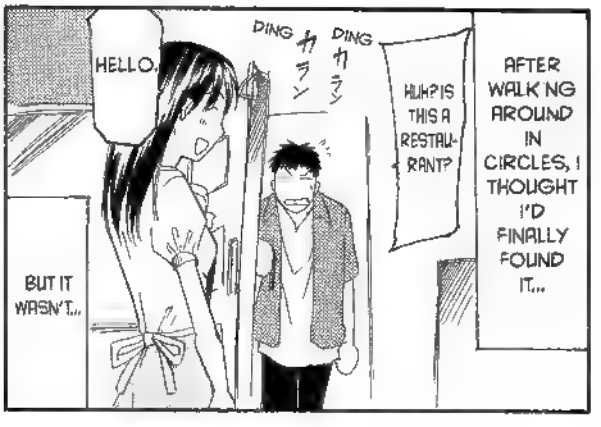
SO, DO YOU STILL HATE ME?
.....
NO...
I...
I'M SORRY...
BLUSH
.....
I DON'T...
...HATE YOU.
WHAT? BUT...
THIS IS JUST SO SUDDEN.
THUMP
THUMP
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GIVE ME AN ANSWER RIGHT NOW.
TH-THEN...
WILL YOU... BE MY GIRL-FRIEND?

YOU CAN TELL ME...
...AFTER I COME BACK HOME FROM THE FINALS WITH THE FIRST-PLACE TROPHY.
AH...
LATER/
WHAT SHOULD DO?
I'VE NEVER EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT HIM IN THAT WAY.
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE ACTUALLY LIKES ME.

WHAT...
...SHOULD I TELL HIM?
1
1
.....
TSUDA-SENPAI...
THE DAY...
...I LOST YOU, I FINALLY REALIZED HOW I FELT.
CLINK
BUT...
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO TELL YOU THAT NOW?
SENPA..


I GOT LOST THE MINUTE I LEFT THE STA-TION.
HUH?
WHERE THE HELL IS MAKU-HARI HALL?
I DON'T EVEN OWN A CELL PHONE, SO I COULDN'T CALL MY EDITOR.
K FEST

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER THIRTEEN
SEO GOES TO A SIGNING - PART 1



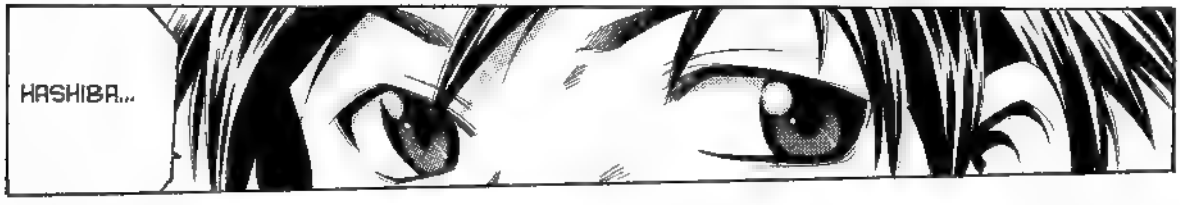
AKITSUKI SKIPPED MORNING PRACTICE AGAIN TODAY.
THAT'S THREE DAYS IN A ROW, AND I HAVEN'T EVEN HEARD FROM HIM.
I'M STARTING TO WORRY. HE'S SIGNED UP TO RUN IN TOMORROW'S REGIONAL MEET.
.....
YEAH.
SHOULD I GO FIND HIM AFTER SCHOOL, SENPAI?
YEAH, THANKS, HASHIBA.
ASK HIM WHAT'S GOING ON.
OKAY.

SUZUKA

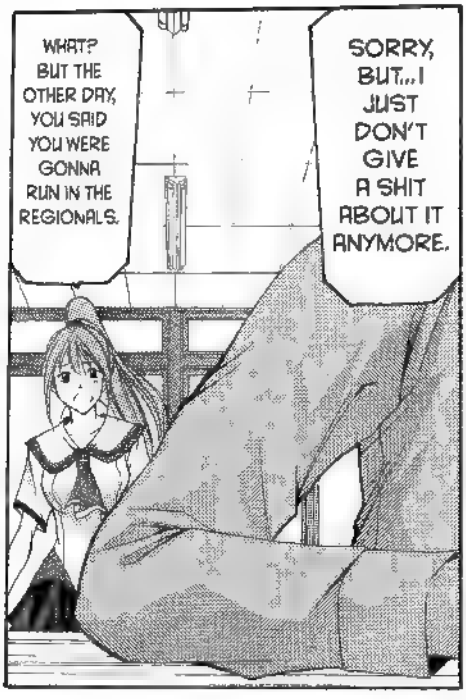
#24 FOOL

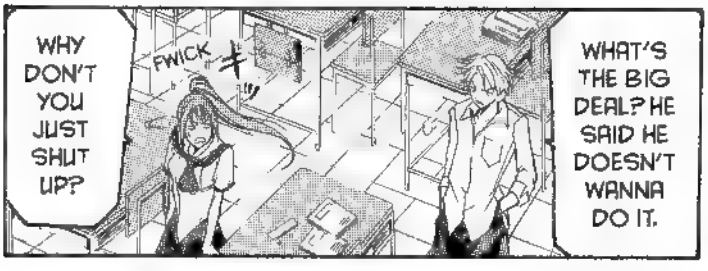
DING
DONG
DING
DONG
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE TURNING BACK INTO AN OLD MAN AGAIN, AKITSUKI.
FOR A WHILE THERE, I THOUGHT THE TRACK TEAM MIGHT ACTUALLY PUMP SOME LIFE INTO YOU.
DID YOU SKIP...
...PRACTICE AGAIN TODAY?
HEY, CAN YOU HEAR ME, GRAMPS?
.....
AKITSUKI!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING? YOU'D BETTER GET YOUR ASS TO PRACTICE!


HASHIBA...

YOU WERE CHOSEN TO REPRESENT OUR SCHOOL.
YOU'D BETTER GET YOUR SHIT TOGETHER.


WHAT? BUT THE OTHER DAY, YOU SAID YOU WERE GONNA RUN IN THE REGIONALS.
SORRY, BUT... I JUST DON'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT IT ANYMORE.

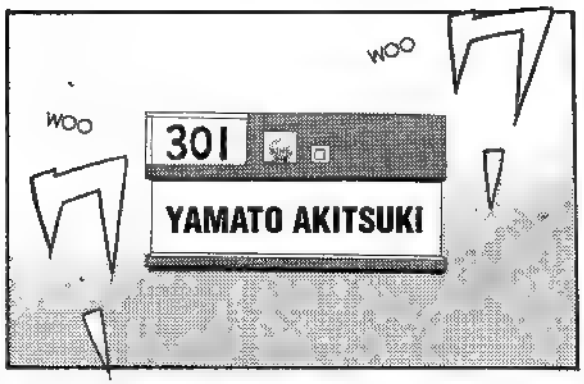

WHY DON'T YOU JUST SHUT UP?
FWICK
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? HE SAID HE DOESN'T WANNA DO IT.

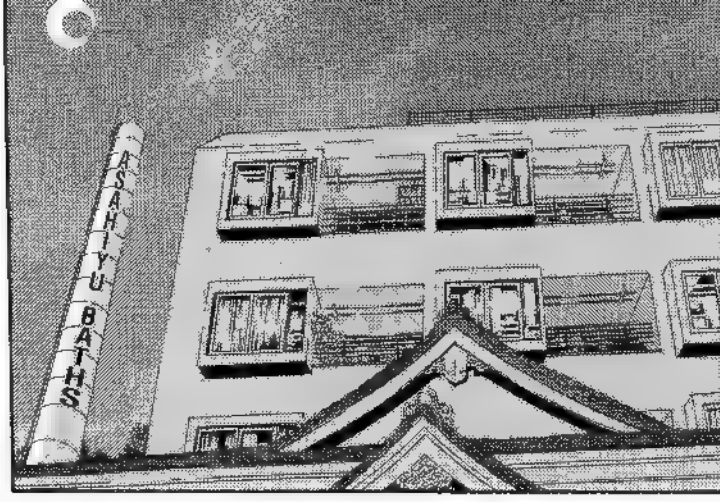
YANK
REMEMBER?
I TOLD YOU SUZUKA HATES GUYS WHO DON'T TAKE THEMSELVES SERIOUSLY.

AH...WAIT, AKITSUKI!
THUNK

SHUT UP.
JUST LEAVE HIM ALONE.

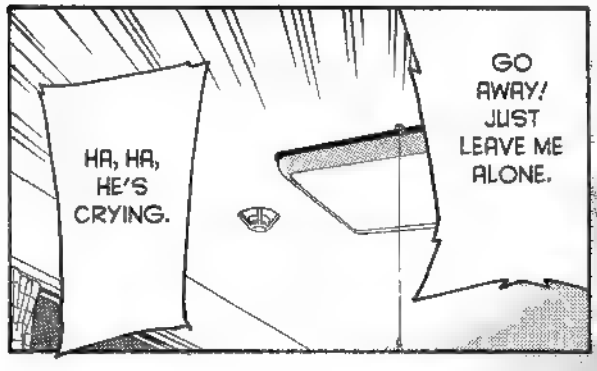
MIYAMOTO-SENPAI ENTERED YOU IN THE COMPETITION BECAUSE HE BELIEVES IN YOU!
SO YOU'D BETTER BE THERE TOMORROW.


WOO
WOO
301
YAMATO AKITSUKI


ASAHIYU BATHS

ALL MEN ARE PIGS!
WHACK
HEY, GET YOUR BUTT OVER HERE, AND START DRINKING. WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?

.....
I MEAN, YOU FOLLOWED HER ALL THE WAY TO HER FAMILY'S HOUSE. OF COURSE SHE'S GONNA FREAK OUT. CREEPY.


HA, HA, HE'S CRYING.
GO AWAY! JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.

WHAT? DID SUZUKA-CHAN SAY SHE HATES YOU AGAIN?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD EASE OFF ON THE WHOLE STALKER THING.

YOU SKIP TRACK PRACTICE, AND JUST SIT HERE WALLOWING IN YOUR OWN SELF-PITY.
WHAT HAPPENED TO NEVER GIVING UP?
I HAVEN'T—
.....
LIKE THEY DON'T ALREADY KNOW.
CAN'T YOU KEEP IT DOWN?
IF ANYONE FINDS OUT I'VE GOT A COLLEGE GIRL IN HERE, I'LL BE BUSTED.
DING
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT A VISITOR.
ピーンポーン
DONG
YES?
カチャ
CLICK

ASAHINA...
A—

ARE YOU...
...QUIT-TING THE TEAM?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
.....

BUT I GUESS YOU NEVER REALLY CARED ABOUT THE TEAM
.....

YOU'VE BEEN WORKING SO HARD LATELY...
I ACTUALLY STARTED TO THINK THAT MAYBE YOU DO HAVE WHAT IT TAKES.

THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU NOT TO JOIN UNLESS YOU WERE SERIOUS-
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE...

...

SHH!
THEY'RE FIGHTING.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
SO I GUESS YOU WIN.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED ME TO QUIT.
OH, SO THAT'S HOW IT IS!
SNAP
.....
YOU JOIN UP ON A WHIM, AND THEN YOU JUST QUIT...
...WITHOUT EVEN THINKING ABOUT THE REST OF THE TEAM.
I GUESS I WAS RIGHT ALL ALONG.

I MEAN...
THAT'S RIGHT...
I JUST REALLY...
YEAH.
...WANT TO SEE HIM.
1
BESIDES...
YOU LOOK JUST LIKE HIM.

I'LL NEVER BE LIKE KAZUKI TSUDA ANYWAY!

WHA

ALL YOU DO IS COMPARE ME TO HIM.
YOU LOOK AT ME, AND ALL YOU SEE IS HIM.
WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
I...
QUIT COMPARING ME TO SOME DEAD GUY!
JUST GET OVER IT!

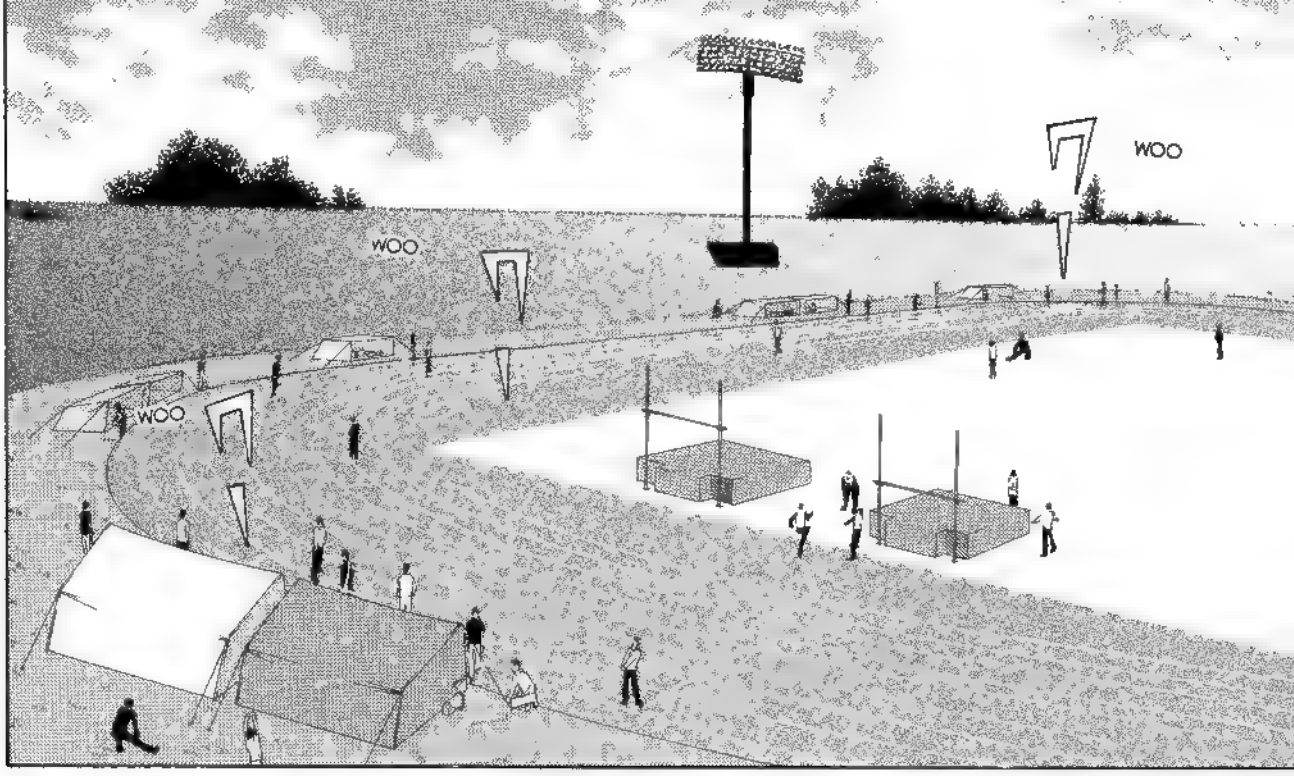
SLAP

.....!
SLAM
AH!
FWOOSH

IDIOT.
LET'S GO... THIS IS NO FUN.
DON'T EVEN THINK OF PUKING HERE
DON'T FEEL SO GOOD, SAOTOME-SAN.
SLAM

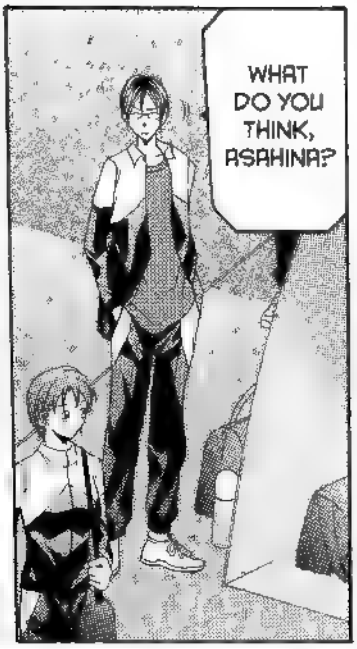
...THE HELL DID SHE SLAP ME?
WHY...

BATHS
SHIT
AND WHY'D SHE HAVE TO MAKE THAT FACE?
.....


WOO
WOO
WOO

LOOKS LIKE AKITSUKI'S REALLY NOT GONNA SHOW.
DAMN IT...

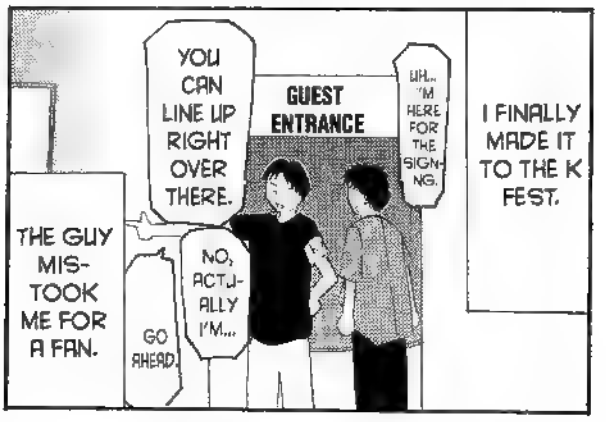
E-EASY NOW...
HELL IF I KNOW!

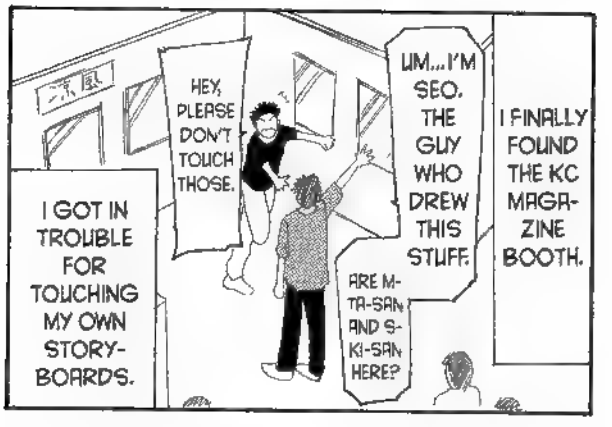

WHAT DO YOU THINK, ASAHINA?

TOKYO REGIONAL TRACK COMPETITION
CHATTER
CHATTER

301

YAMATO AKITSUKI


I FINALLY MADE IT TO THE K FEST.
UH... I'M HERE FOR THE SIGNING.
GUEST ENTRANCE
YOU CAN LINE UP RIGHT OVER THERE.
NO, ACTUALLY I'M...
GO AHEAD.
THE GUY MISTOOK ME FOR A FAN.

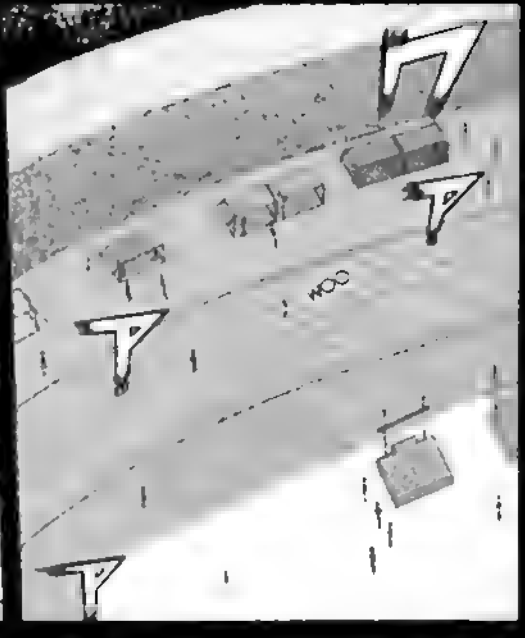

I FINALLY FOUND THE KC MAGAZINE BOOTH.
UM... I'M SEO. THE GUY WHO DREW THIS STUFF.
ARE M-TA-SAN AND S-KI-SAN HERE?
HEY, PLEASE DON'T TOUCH THOSE.
I GOT IN TROUBLE FOR TOUCHING MY OWN STORYBOARDS.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER FOURTEEN
SEO GOES TO A SIGNING - PART 2

HURRY IT UP, YASUNOBU!
WHY'D YOU GET ME UP SO EARLY?
YOU DON'T WANNA SPEND YOUR SUNDAY LYING AROUND YOUR ROOM, DO YOU? IT'S TOO DEPRESSING.
WELL THEN, WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO TO THE TRACK MEET?
ISN'T THAT TODAY?
GRR
WHY THE HELL WOULD I WANNA DO THAT?
SLAP
WHY SHOULD I GO TO SOME STUPID TRACK MEET AFTER...
...EVERY-THING SHE SAID TO ME? SHE SLAPPED ME, YOU KNOW?
OKAY, THEN. HOW ABOUT KARA-OKE?
NOWHERE'S GONNA BE OPEN THIS EARLY

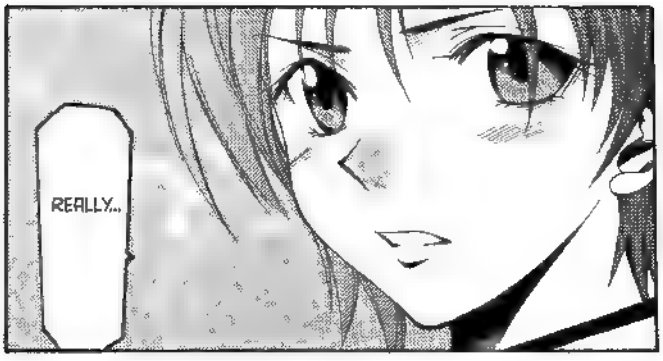
SUZUKA

#25 PROVOCATION



GOD...I CAN'T BELIEVE I WAS ACTUALLY WORRIED ABOUT HIM.
STOP COM-PARING ME TO SOME DEAD GUY!
JUST GET OVER IT!
HOW DO YOU FEEL? DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BREAK ANY RECORDS TODAY?
OVER HERE!
WOO
HERE HE COMES!
KYAA
WOO
OH YEAH, I ALMOST FORGOT... THESE ARE HIS STOMPING GROUNDS.
WHAT'S WITH ALL THE TV CAMERAS?
5

THAT'S EMERSON ARIMA. HE'S A SOPHOMORE AT TOUTO PREP.
HE'S THE NUMBER ONE HIGH SCHOOL SPRINTER IN THE NATION.


REALLY...

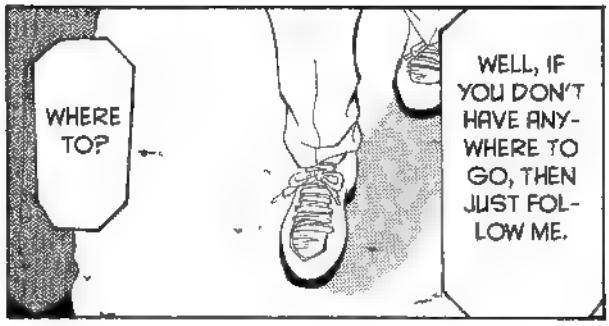
BACK IN JUNIOR HIGH, HE ALWAYS PLACED SECOND RIGHT BEHIND KAZUKI.
HE ROSE TO THE TOP THE MOMENT HE STARTED HIGH SCHOOL.

.....
CHATTER
CHATTER
IF KAZUKI WERE ALIVE TODAY...
THIS WOULD BE ONE HELL OF A COMPETI-TION.

IF HE HADN'T DIED...
I BET ALL THOSE REPORTERS WOULD BE SURROUNDING TSUDA-SENPAI RIGHT NOW.
YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT.
THAT'S WHY THIS YEAR I WAS HOPING AKITSUKI COULD TAKE KAZUKI'S PLACE AS—
WHAT DOES YAMATO-KUN HAVE TO DO WITH ANY OF THIS?
THAT LOSER WON'T EVEN BOTHER TO SHOW UP.
FWICK
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM WITH AKITSUKI?
.....
AND IF TSUDA-SENPAI WERE ALIVE TODAY, THERE WOULD BE NO COMPE-TITION.
HE WOULD KICK ARIMA'S ASS...

KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN, YOU IDIOT.
I DON'T CARE WHO HEARS ME.
THAT GUY'S NOTHING COMPARED TO TSUDA-SENPAI!

NICE PLAN-NING, GRAMPS.


WELL, IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY-WHERE TO GO, THEN JUST FOL-LOW ME.
WHERE TO?

GEEZ...
THERE AREN'T EVEN ANY RESTAU-RANTS OPEN.

YOU'LL FIND THAT OUT WHEN WE GET THERE!
.....
TOKYO REGIONAL TRACK COMPETITION
YEAH, WELL... YOU WOULDN'T HAVE COME IF I'D TOLD YOU THE TRUTH.
WHAT THE HELL? THIS IS WHERE THE TRACK COMPETITION IS!
OF COURSE I WOULDN'T HAVE COME! DID HASHIBA PUT YOU UP TO THIS?
I CAME HERE CAUSE THERE'RE GONNA BE TONS OF HOT CHICKS.
I DON'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS.
SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL RUN YOUR RACE.
ONCE THE GIRLS SEE HOW FAST YOU ARE, MAYBE YOU'LL GET SOME NUMBERS.
YOU DIOT.

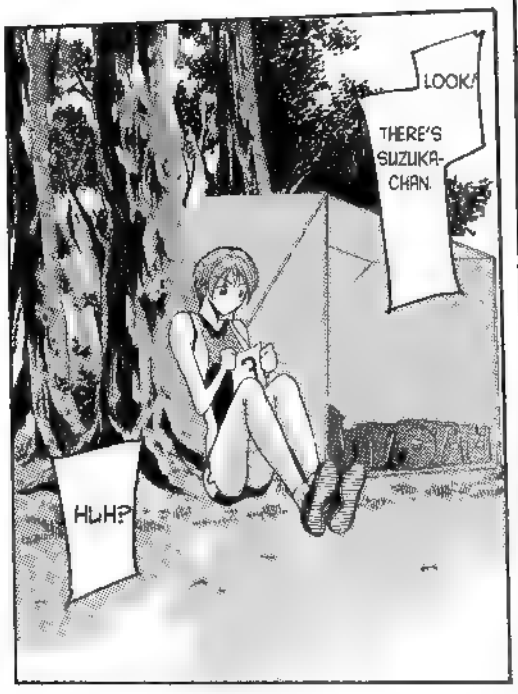
I DON'T HAVE ANY REASON TO RUN ANYMORE.
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO SAY THIS?

OH REALLY?

HANG ON.
I'M GOING HOME.

THEN YOU CAN JUST HANG OUT INSIDE.
YOU MIGHT MEET SOME CUTIES.
H-HEY.

AND...
...SOME PLAYBOY IS ABOUT TO HIT ON HER.

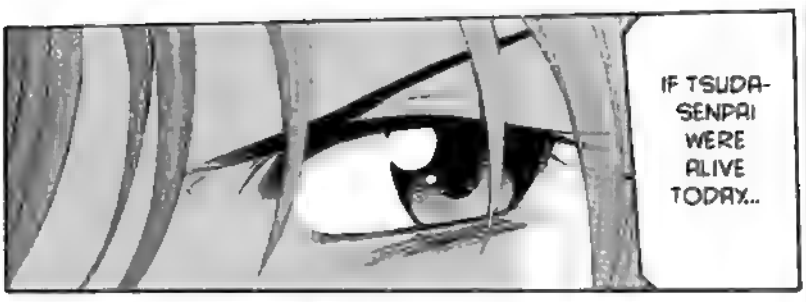

LOOK!
THERE'S SUZUKA-CHAN.
HUH?

HUH?
'SUP.
LONG TIME NO SEE.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
WHOA! I SEE YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED.

YOU GUYS SEEMED PRETTY CLOSE.
DID YOU HAVE A THING FOR HIM OR SOMETHING?
I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOU—
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WAS ALWAYS HANGING OUT WITH TSUDA AT ALL THE REGIONAL COMPETI-TIONS.
ズッ
STING
キッ
I COULD CARE LESS.
. . . . . .
OUCH. THAT'S PROBABLY THE LAST THING YOU WANNA HEAR, EH?
IF YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO SAY, THEN JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
HUH?
OH, I'VE GOT SOME-THING TO SAY.

A FEW MINUTES AGO...
YOU SAID I WAS NOTHING COMPARED TO TSUDA, DIDN'T YOU?
WELL, THAT KIND OF PISSES ME OFF.
OH, I AM SO SORRY.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST FORGET YOU EVER HEARD T
GOD, YOU'RE PATHETIC... YOU'RE ONLY PISSED OFF CAUSE YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE.
HUH?
IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE AN APOLOGY?
WHAT DID YOU SAY?

EVEN IF TSUDA WEREN'T DEAD...
I'D STILL BE NUMBER ONE.
KYAAA


IF TSUDA-SENPAI WERE ALIVE TODAY...

ARE THEY FIGHTING?
IT'S ARIMA AND SOME CHICK

LISTEN TO YOURSELF...
IF TSUDA WERE ALIVE... IF TSUDA WERE ALIVE...
LISTEN UP! THERE ARE NO IFS, ANDS, OR BUTS ABOUT IT. TSUDA IS...

...DEAD!

HUH? WHAT THE HELL IS HER PROBLEM?
D-D YOU HEAR THAT? SHE THINKS TSUDA WAS FASTER THAN ARIMA.
CHATTER
CHATTER

DON'T TRY TO TELL ME THAT SOME DEAD GUY IS FASTER THAN ME!
ARE YOU FUCK-ING CRAZY?

YEAH! APOLO-G ZE TO ARIMA RIGHT NOW.
YOU'D BETTER WATCH YOUR MOUTH, YOU L TTLE B TCH!
MAYBE I'LL FORGIVE YOU.
WHY DON'T YOU GET DOWN ON YOUR KNEES, AND SAY YOU'RE SORRY?
THERE'S NO REASON FOR ME TO GET MIXED UP IN THIS...
LET'S GO...IF WE GET INVOLVED, WE'D ONLY BE STOOP-ING DOWN TO THEIR LEVEL.
YEAH.
NO REASON AT ALL...

ガサッ
HUH?
GET BACK HERE, YOU IDIOT!
ドン

YAMATO-KUN!
YA—

HUH?
WHY THE HELL SHOULD ASAHINA APOLO-GIZE TO YOU?

WHO'S THIS? YOUR BOYFRIEND? FINE, YOU CAN GET DOWN ON YOUR KNEES, AND APOLOGIZE FOR HER.
ALL RIGHT, SPIKE HEAD?

SO YOU THINK TSUDA WAS FASTER THAN ME?
WHAT?

HUH?
I COULD GIVE TWO SHITS ABOUT YOU AND TSUDA!

NOBODY'S FASTER...
...THAN I AM!
?
HUH?

THE S GNING FINALLY STARTED.
GO ON.
BUT I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO SAY!
JUST START TALK-ING.
THEY JUST KIND OF THREW ME OUT THERE ON STAGE.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER FIFTEEN
SEO GOES TO A SIGNING – PART 3

I GOT THROUGH A ONE HOUR SIGN-ING. .
YOU COULD'VE AT LEAST TALKED TO THE FANS A LITTLE, SEO-SAN.
AFTER THE EVENT
NOW YOU TELL ME.
...IN JUST FIFTEEN MINUTES.

※ *SORRY F D DN'T SEEM VERY INTO IT. I WAS JUST NERVOUS.

SUZUKA

#26 THE TARGET

HUH?
DUDE... DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
I MEAN, WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
WHAT AN IDIOT.
THAT GUY THINKS HE'S FASTER THAN ARIMA?
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I'M SAYING.
THERE'S NO WAY I'LL LOSE TO YOU!
YA-YAMATO-KUN!

STEP
HEY, WAIT UP!
THIS IS STUPID.
YOU'RE NOT EVEN WORTH MY TIME.
.....
I TAKE IT YOU'RE GONNA BE RUNNING IN THE 100-METER DASH!
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT TRYING TO PUSS OUT!
YEAH, WE'LL BE WATCHING YOU.
I GUESS WE'LL FIND OUT WHO'S FASTER SOON ENOUGH.

WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU THINK-ING?
WHY'D YOU SAY THAT?
THAT GUY PISSES ME OFF.
STUCK UP ASS-HOLE.
PISSES YOU OFF?
WH-WHAT IF YOU LOSE?
DID YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT THAT?
IF THAT HAPPENS, I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO...
...APOLO-GIZE.

WHAT?

DON'T WORRY. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS WIN, RIGHT?
CAN'T YOU THINK BEFORE YOU OPEN UP YOUR BIG MOUTH?
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO BE SO RECK-LESS?

STEP
FIRST, I'D BET-TER FIND SOMEONE WHO WILL LET ME BORROW SOME SHORTS AND SPIKES.
I'M SURE I'LL MAN-AGE SOME-HOW.
HEY, WAIT...

WHAT'S WITH YOU?
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WERE QUITTING THE TEAM.

CHATTER
7

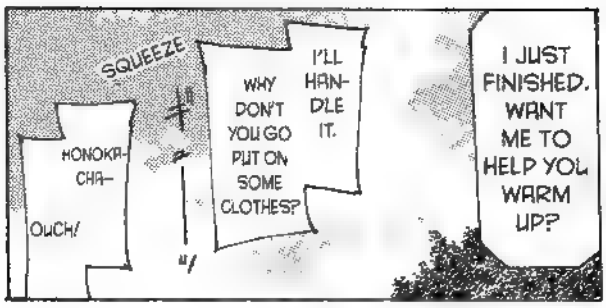
SMACK
?

CALM DOWN, CAPTAIN. HE SAID HE WAS SORRY.
GRR
YOU'RE DEAD, AKITSUKI!

...YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE YOUR SPIKES OR YOUR UNIFORM?
FIRST YOU SKIP PRACTICE FOR THREE DAYS, THEN YOU SHOW UP TO THE COMPETITION LATE, AND...
29
OUCH.

ARE YOU OKAY, AKITSUKI-KUN?
PUT DOWN THE SHOT PUT BALL!
LET GO OF ME, MYAMOTO!
Y-YEAH.

OKAY!
I'LL GO CHANGE. HELP AKITSUKI WARM UP, SAKURAI.
HEY, SOMEBODY LEND AKITSUKI SOME SHORTS AND SPIKES.
YOU CAN HAVE MINE... I'M RUNNING THE 400 METER AT 11:00.
THANKS, MIYAMOTO-SENPAI.
NO... THAT'S OKAY! THIS IS PART OF MY JOB.
SORRY, HONOKA-CHAN. I KNOW YOU'RE REALLY BUSY.
I HAD SOME STUFF TO DEAL WITH.
HEH, SORRY.
I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME.
YOU DIDN'T SHOW UP FOR THREE DAYS. I WAS STARTING TO WORRY.
OH...
I WAS WORRIED YOU'D HATE ME IF I GOT TOO CLINGY, SO I DIDN'T WANNA STOP BY YOUR HOUSE.


I JUST FINISHED. WANT ME TO HELP YOU WARM UP?
I'LL HANDLE IT.
WHY DON'T YOU GO PUT ON SOME CLOTHES?
SQUEEZE
HONOKA-CHA—
OUCH!

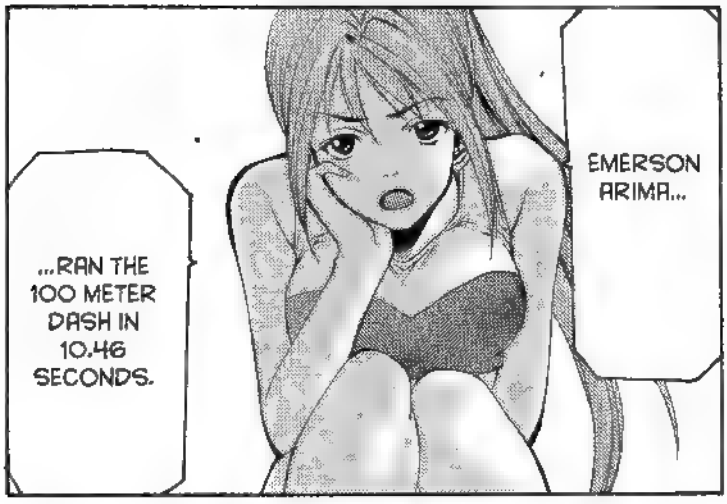
I HEARD ALL ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED!
HUH?

GRR
HASHIBA.
SO YOU DECIDED TO SHOW UP AFTER ALL, AKITSUKI.

WHAT?
WHY'D YOU DO THAT?

YOU PICKED A FIGHT WITH EMERSON ARIMA, RIGHT?
ALL THE SPRINTERS ARE TALKING ABOUT IT.

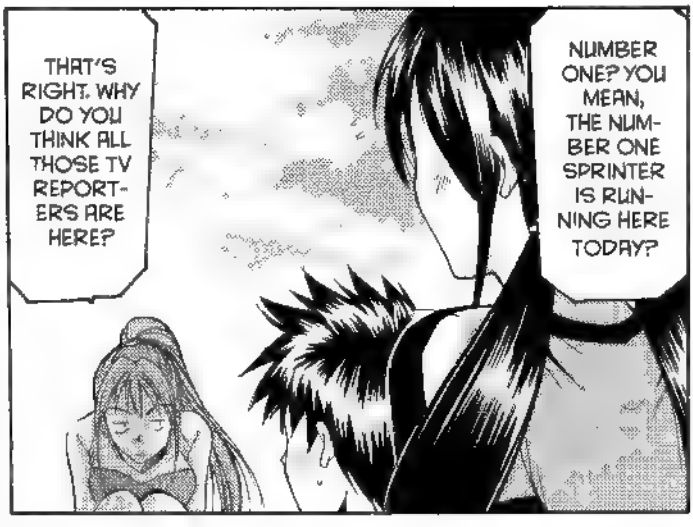
NO WAY.
AKITSUKI-KUN ISN'T THE TYPE OF GUY WHO JUST GOES AROUND STARTING FIGHTS.
WELL...
WAS HE...
THAT DICKHEAD JUST PISSES ME OFF.
...TRYING TO DEFEND ASAHINA-SAN?
STUCK UP ASSHOLES LIKE HIM ARE USUALLY ALL TALK ANYWAY.
I CAN TAKE HIM.
.....
WHAT?
STARE
?!


EMERSON ARIMA...
...RAN THE 100 METER DASH IN 10.46 SECONDS.

DID YOU EVEN KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM BEFORE YOU WENT AND PICKED THAT F GHT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

HE'S THE NUMBER ONE HIGH SCHOOL SPRINTER IN THE NATION.
.....

DO...
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN BEAT HIM, AKITSUKI-KUN?


NUMBER ONE? YOU MEAN, THE NUMBER ONE SPRINTER IS RUNNING HERE TODAY?
THAT'S RIGHT. WHY DO YOU THINK ALL THOSE TV REPORTERS ARE HERE?

YOU HAD NO IDEA, DID YOU?
AK TSUKI-KUN!
GULP
.....
IS HE REALLY THAT FAST?
UH... WELL...
YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD, AK TSUKI-KUN.
HE'S FREAK-ING OUT.
I'LL NEVER WIN!
GOTTA USE THE JOHN!
STEP
AH!
MAYBE I'LL JUST SAY I'VE GOT A STOMACHACHE AND GO HIDE SOMEWHERE. IF I DON'T GO OUT THERE, THEY'LL HAVE TO DISQUALIFY ME.
YOU OKAY?

I KNOW THE CAPTAIN LOOKED PISSED, BUT HE'LL BE ROOTING FOR YOU.
GOOD LUCK, AKIT SUKI.
SORRY I TOOK SO LONG.
AH...
ACTU-ALLY, MY STOMACH KIND OF HURTS...
HEH...
ROAR
YOU MISSED THE RACE BECAUSE YOUR STOMACH HURT?
HUH?
I'M GLAD YOU MADE IT.
IF YOU'D GOTTEN DISQUALI-FIED, THE CAPTAIN WOULD'VE KILLED YOU.
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD.
DRIP
DRIP
I'LL DO MY BEST...

GOOD LUCK!
AKI-SUKI-KUN
IS HE OKAY?
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
YOU WORRIED ABOUT YAMATO?
RUSTLE
HUH?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...
...HATTORI-KUN?
YOU'D BETTER PUT SOME CLOTHES ON, OR YOU'LL CATCH COLD.
HUH?
THERE'S NO WAY HE'LL EVER WIN.
WOO
WOO
WELL... I HEARD YAMATO WAS GONNA RACE, SO I FIGURED I'D BETTER COME WATCH.
HE'S RACING AGAINST THE NUMBER ONE HIGH SCHOOL SPRINTER IN THE NATION.
WHAT THE HELL WAS HE THINKING?

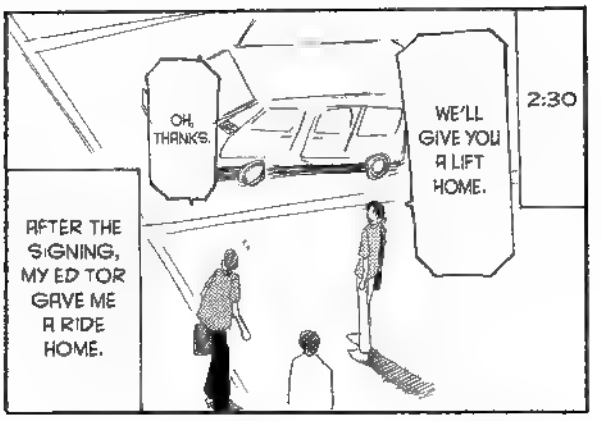
HYUU
AND NOW LOOK WHAT HE'S GOT-TEN HIMSELF INTO. THE NUMBER ONE SPRINTER IN JAPAN HAS...
YEAH...
THAT IDIOT. HIS MOTTO IS ALWAYS "ACT NOW, THINK LATER."
...SET HIS SIGHTS ON YAMATO.
.....

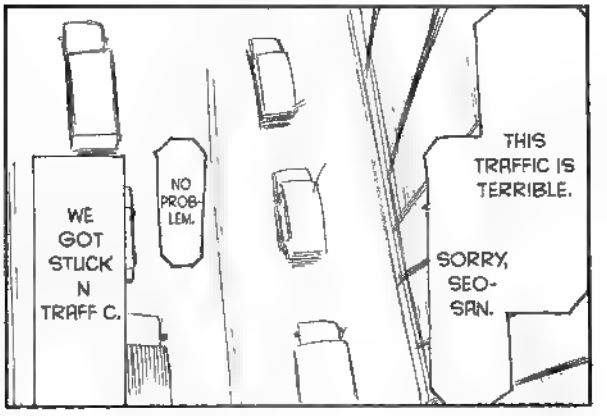
LET'S GO.
IT'S ABOUT TO START.
BUT...
THIS IS THE LAST CALL FOR THE 100-METER DASH.
ALL PARTICIPATING ATHLETES PLEASE GATHER ON THE TRACK IMMEDIATELY!
I'M SURE GRAMPS WILL FIND A WAY TO MAKE THIS INTERESTING.
COME ON!
HE HAS NO IDEA WHAT HE'S UP AGAINST.
I DON'T THINK SO...

THESE SPIKES AND SHORTS FIT PERFECTLY.
GUESS I CAN'T USE THAT AS AN EXCUSE.
HERE I AM...
SQUIRM
AHH...
AH... HERE!
NUMBER 36! YAMATO AKITSUKI-KUN!
LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.
YOU WEREN'T HERE FOR THE FIRST CALL, WERE YOU?
YOU'VE GOTTA BE HERE, SO WE CAN GIVE YOU YOUR NUMBER.
OH... SORRY...
36
FINE, JUST PUT IT ON. YOU'RE IN THE FIRST GROUP.
GET READY TO...
STEP
TOTO PREP
...GET DOWN ON YOUR KNEES AND BEG FOR FORGIVENESS.

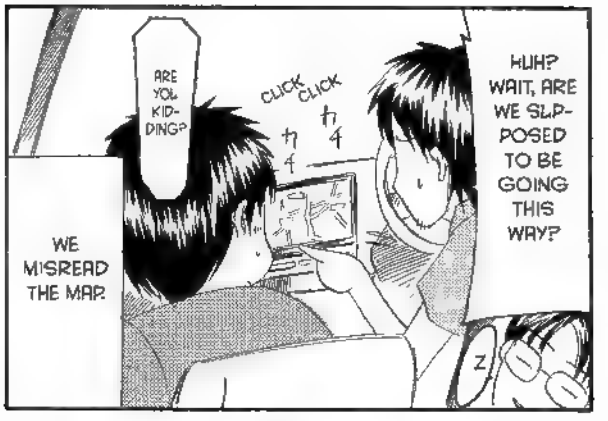
HEY, THERE'S THAT SPIKE HEAD!
WOO
BREAK YOUR RECORD ARIMA.
WOO
GO, ARIMA-KUN!
WHAT'S WITH THE HUGE AUDIENCE?
?
HEY, GRAMPS! DON'T BREAK A HIP!
MAYBE I SHOULD JUST APOLOGIZE RIGHT NOW.
HEY, UM...
HUH?
7
I BROUGHT SUZUKA-CHAN ALONG, SO YOU'D BETTER BE FAST!
...
WHAT?
YOU READY TO APOLO-GIZE?
A-ASAHINA...

STEP 111
I CAN'T LET HER SEE ME LOOKING LIKE A LOSER!
FORGET IT!
WOO
W.L. THE FIRST GROUP PLEASE TAKE THEIR PLACES ON THE FIELD.
GRIP
ﾋｭｯ





SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER SIXTEEN
SEO GOES TO A SIGNING – PART 4



IN TWO HOURS? NO WAY!
DON'T BE LATE
MAKE SURE YOU GET THE STORY-BOARDS TO ME BY 10:00.
BY THE TIME I FINALLY MADE IT HOME, T WAS AFTER 8:00.

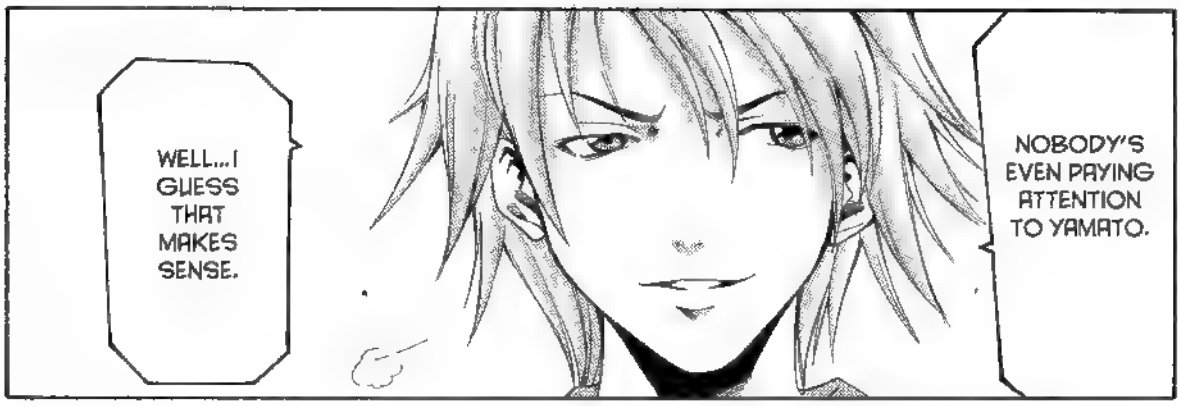
*IT TOOK ME T LL 11:00.

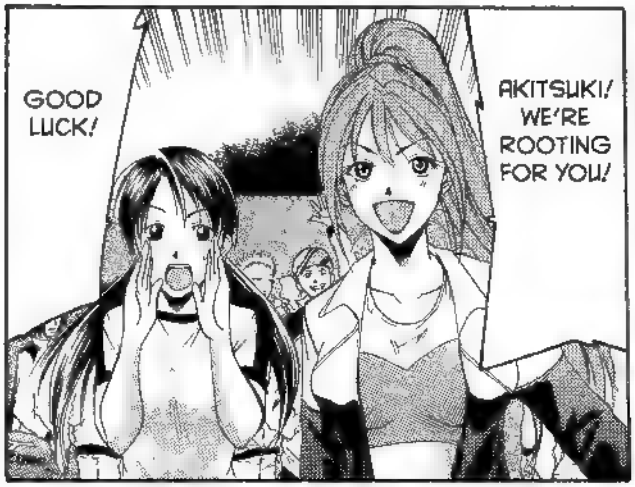
カチャ
CLICK
カチャ
CLICK
LET'S GET STARTED!
7
36
SWIP
36

SUZUKA

#27 THE SHOWDOWN

CHATTER
CHATTER
NAH, HE'S NOT GONNA WASTE HIS ENERGY ON A REGIONAL RUN LIKE THIS ONE.
YEAH, I JUST WANNA SEE IF HE BREAKS HIS RECORD.
I GUESS THERE'S NOT MUCH COMPETITION FOR HIM OUT THERE.
LOOKS LIKE ARIMA'S TREATING THIS JUST LIKE ANY OTHER RACE.


WELL... I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE.
NOBODY'S EVEN PAYING ATTENTION TO YAMATO.


GOOD LUCK!
AKITSUKI! WE'RE ROOTING FOR YOU!

.....

NO... I JUST YELLED AT HIM, SO...
SNEAK
HEY, CAPTAIN... WHY DON'T YOU COME OUT HERE AND WATCH?

.....
SECOND?
AKITSUKI! ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS PLACE SECOND IN ORDER TO MOVE ON!
DON'T GIVE UP!
ON YOUR MARKS...
CLICK カチャ
CLICK カチャ
IT'S MY FIRST...
...THE NUMBER ONE HIGH SCHOOL SPRINTER IN THE NATION.
EMERSON ARIMA IS...

I'M UP AGAINST THE NUMBER ONE SPRINTER IN THE NATION.
...COM-PETITION EVER, AND...
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, YAMATO!
I GUESS THERE'S NOBODY OUT THERE WHO THINKS I EVEN HAVE A CHANCE.

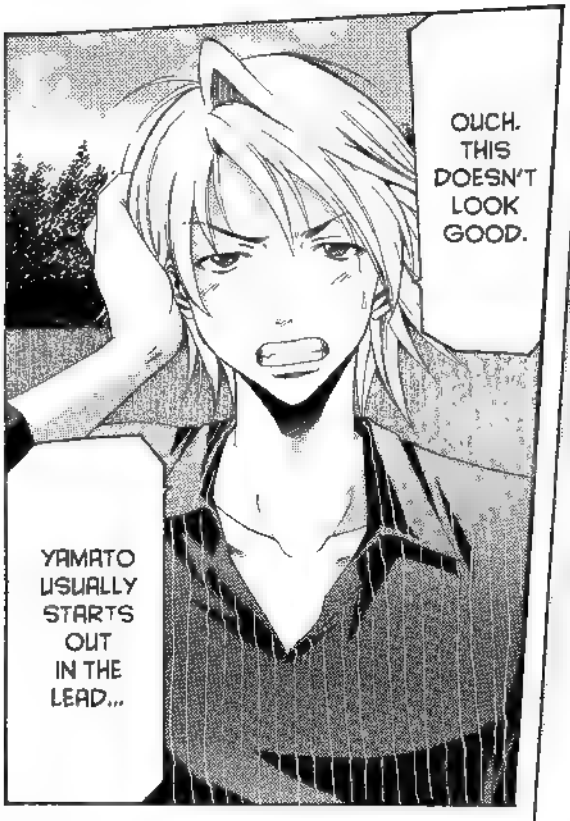
ASAHINA...
.....
SUZUKA-CHAN'S WORRIED ABOUT YOU!
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT...

I DON'T CARE HOW MUCH YOU TRY TO IMITATE TSUDA. YOU STILL WON'T BEAT ME.
GOING FOR A TWO-FOOTED ROCKET LAUNCH, EH?
THUMP THUMP
I MAY NOT HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BEAT HIM...
THUMP THUMP
I'M NOT KAZUKI TSUDA.
GET SET!
ISHIN
BUT...
CREAK
I WON'T LET HIM GET AWAY WITH WHAT HE DID!

BANG
THAT ASSHOLE MADE ASAHINA CRY!
7
36

7
NO ONE CAN BEAT HIM!
WOO
GO, ARIMA!
HE'S ALREADY WAY BEHIND...

HE'S NUMBER ONE IN THE NATION?


OUCH. THIS DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.
YAMATO USUALLY STARTS OUT IN THE LEAD...

FWOOSH

HEH.
I CAN PROBABLY JUST RELAX NOW..
..AND STILL WIN WITHOUT A FIGHT.
.....
GRIP
36

SHIT! I CAN'T CATCH UP!
36
HE'S RIGHT THERE IN FRONT OF ME, BUT...
I GUESS AKITSUKI'S JUST NOT READY TO FACE HIM YET.
I CAN'T LOSE TO THIS ASS-HOLE!
OH, MAN...
I THOUGHT HE'D PULL IT OFF SOME-HOW.

CHECK IT OUT! HE'S LEAVING THAT SPIKE-HEADED FREAK IN THE DUST.
YEAH, AFTER HE SAID, "NO ONE'S FASTER THAN ME."
36
SKR.NCH
LOOK! HE'S STILL TRYING.
.....
DOES HE REALLY THINK HE HAS A CHANCE?

WHAT'RE YOU DOING, YOU IDIOT?

SHIVER
ヒクッ

FWOOSH

WHA—?
I'M TRYING!

WHOOSH
7
36

HE'S GONNA PULL IT OFF!
OH MY GOD! THEY'RE NECK AND NECK.

ドキン
THUMP
ドキン
THUMP

HOLDING BACK MY ASS!
STOP HOLDING BACK!
WOO
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, ARIMA?
THIS GUY IS FUCKING FAST!

CHARACTER PROFILE NO. 9

MIHO FUJIKAWA
(EIGHTH GRADE)

DATE OF BIRTH—MARCH 21 (ARIES)
HEIGHT—4'9"
WEIGHT—IT'S A SECRET
BLOOD TYPE—B
MEASUREMENTS—STILL DEVELOPING

LIKES
- HER COUSIN YAMATO
- HER MOM'S COOKING
- GORO-CHAN

DISLIKES
- SAOTOME-SAN
- CLEANING THE BATH
- DOGS

GOAL—TO GET MARRIED

7
36
FWOOSH
FASTER, ARIMA!
WOO
WH-WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON? THEY'RE NECK AND NECK.
WHEN HE HEARD ASAHINA-SAN'S VOICE...
...AKIT-SUK -KUN CAUGHT UP WITH ARIMA.
THUMP ハキン
THUMP トキン

SUZUKA

#28 RESULTS

PASS HIM! PASS HIM!
GO, AKITSUKI!
FWOOSH
ARIMA'S TAKING THE LEAD!
URMPH!
. WON'T LOSE TO THIS ASS-HOLE!
THUNK
I CAN'T...

WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHAT THE HELL?
I CAN'T RUN...
WHOOSH

DON'T SCREW WITH US LIKE THAT, ARIMA!
WOO
ALL RIGHT! FIRST PLACE!

HAHH
HAHH
GRIP
HAHH

HE OVER-DID IT TRYING TO KEEP UP WITH EMERSON.

A-AKIT-SUKI!

HE TALKS ALL BIG, AND THEN HE FALLS DOWN WITH-OUT EVEN CROSSING THE FINISH LINE.
HOW LAME. WHAT'S THAT GUY'S DEAL?

HE WASN'T EVEN A TRAINED RUN-NER TO BEGIN WITH...
SKIP THREE DAYS OF PRACTICE, AND WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO HAP-PEN?

STEP

.....

ALL RIGHT!
DON'T WORRY. I'LL GET ON MY KNEES...
YA-MA-TO-KUN!
IT'S COOL.
HUH?
7

WHY DON'T YOU JUST BEAT IT? I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF YOU.
WHAT?
GRR
HUH?
YOU CALL YOURSELF NUMBER ONE?
7
DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME?
I SAID BEAT IT!

YOU HAVEN'T WON YET.
JUST REMEMBER THAT, ASSHOLE!
AH, HE'S RUNNING AWAY!
WHOOSH
WHAT'S WITH THAT ATTITUDE?
WHAT THE HELL IS AKITSUKI TALKING ABOUT?
HE MAKES OUR WHOLE TEAM LOOK BAD.
HA, HA, HA. OH, MAN... HE IS SO AWESOME!
MY STOMACH HURTS!
SHIT...
I CAN'T BELIEVE I HAD TO RUN THAT FAST FOR SOME STUPID PRELIMINARY.
CRASH
HE FELL AGAIN!

MY LEGS HURT...

I'M SUCH A LOSER...
HYUU
HYUU
"JUST REMEMBER THAT, ASSHOLE." GOD, I CAN'T BELIEVE I SAID THAT.
HOW COULD I BE SO STUPID?

STEP

.....
ASAHINA'S PROBABLY TOTALLY PISSED.

AH...
ASAKURA
KUMI-YA
UM...

36

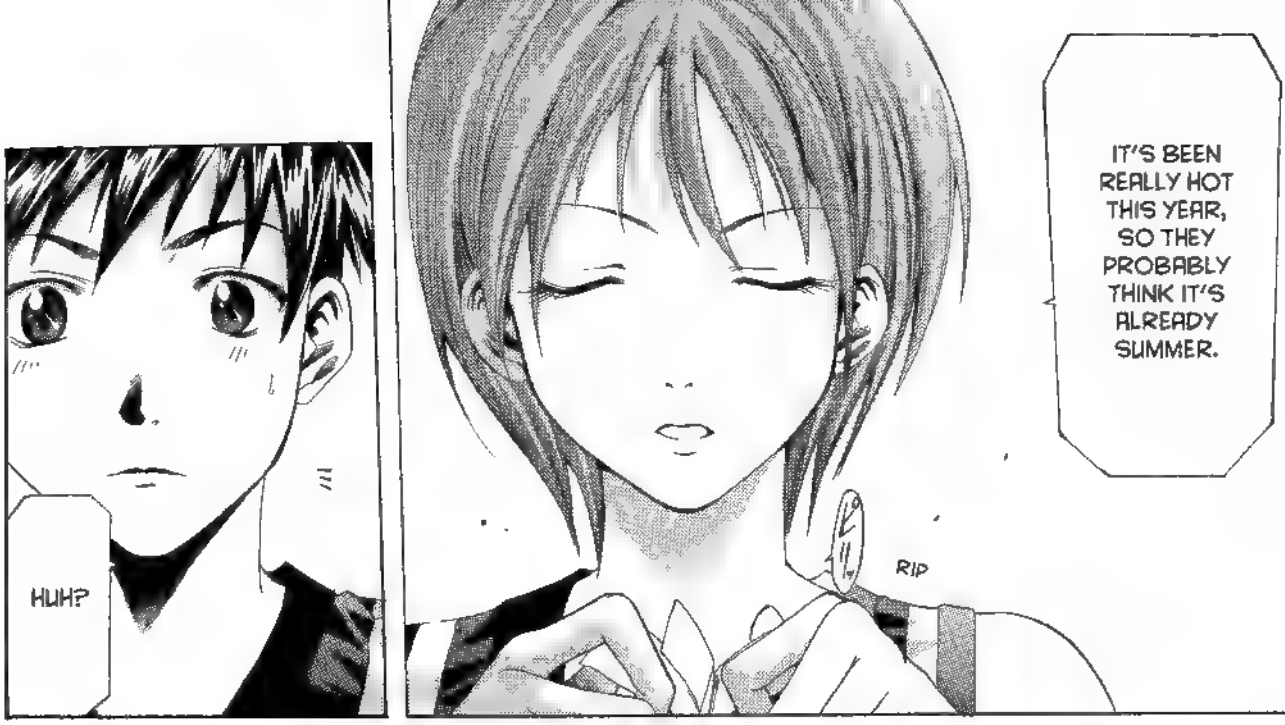
WHY IS SHE SUDDENLY TRYING TO TAKE CARE OF ME?
WHAT THE HELL?

OUCH!
HOLD STILL
36

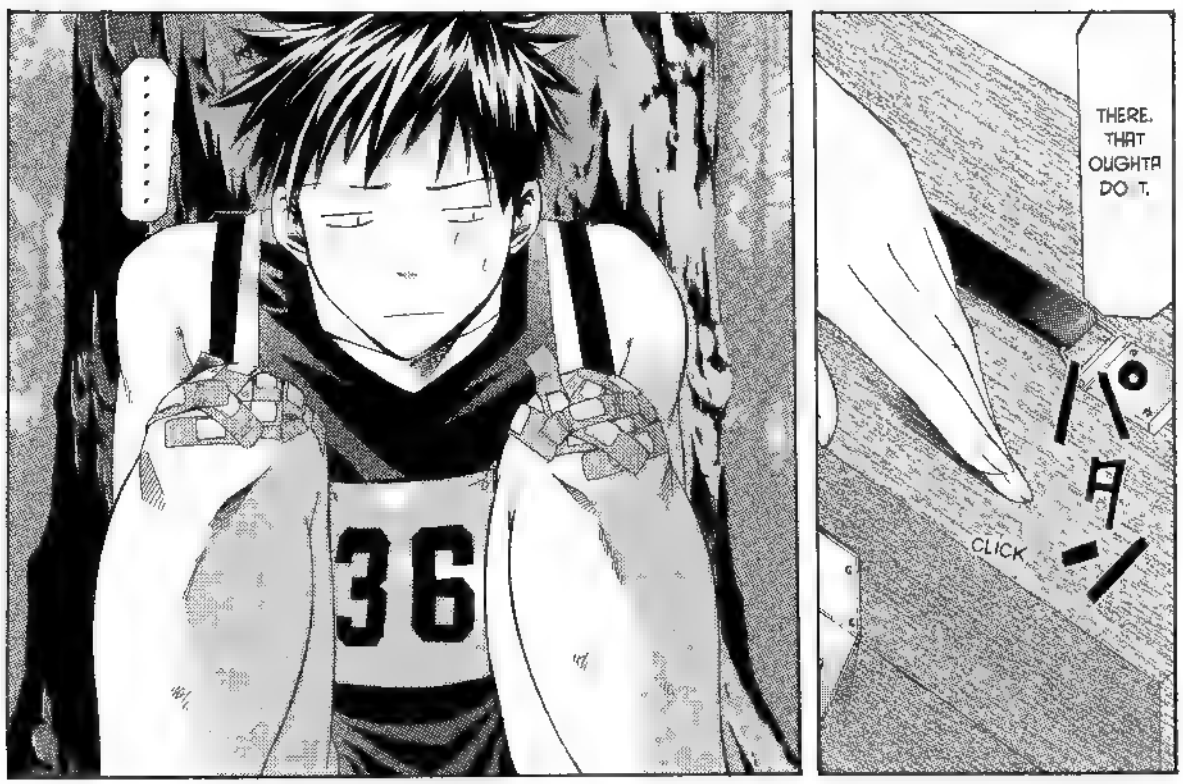
ドキ
THUMP THUMP
MAYBE... SHE'S NOT MAD AFTER ALL.
I MEAN, SHE CHEERED ME ON WHILE I WAS RUNNING...
HEY, ASAHINA. WHY'RE YOU DOING THIS?
QUIT SQUIRMING
SORRY
B-BUT...
I ACTED LIKE SUCH A LOSER IN FRONT OF ALL THOSE PEOPLE.

ミ/ャ
ワ
Buzz
ミ/ャ
ワ
Buzz
ミ/ャ
ワ

ミ/ナ
ア BUZZ
ミ/ナ
ア BUZZ
ミ/ナ
ア BUZZ
ミ/ナ
ア BUZZ
I LISTEN TO THOSE CICADAS.
IT'S ONLY JUNE, BUT THEY'RE ALREADY BUZZ-ING LIKE CRAZY.
ミ/ナ
ア BUZZ
. . . . . .
I'M SO PA-THETIC.
I WAS TALKING LIKE I WAS REALLY HOT STUFF, AND LOOK WHAT HAP-PENED?
YOU'RE P SSED AT ME, AREN'T YOU?
86


IT'S BEEN REALLY HOT THIS YEAR, SO THEY PROBABLY THINK IT'S ALREADY SUMMER.
RIP
HUH?

OH, RIGHT... THE CICADAS.
YEAH.
BUZZ
BUZZ
THE CICADAS.


.....
36
THERE. THAT OUGHTA DO IT.
CLICK

STEP
A-ASA-H.NA.,
36
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR SKIPPING PRACTICE THREE DAYS IN A ROW.
HUH?
THAT'S WHY YOU LOST!
OH...
YEAH, GUESS SO.
YEAH...
EVEN PEOPLE WHO PRACTICE EVERY DAY LOSE THEIR BALANCE BE-FORE GETTING TO THE FINISH LINE SOME-TIMES.
.....

YOU'D BETTER COME TO PRACTICE EVERY DAY...
...FROM NOW ON.

FWIP

WHAT?

WH-WHAT DOES SHE MEAN BY THAT? I'D BETTER COME?
.....

I WAS GONNA GO ANYWAY.
WELL...
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
.....
IT'S SO HOT...
I GUESS SUM-MER IS ALMOST HERE.
ALL RIGHT!
30
KENJI KOBAYAKAWA KUN TOOK FIRST PLACE IN THE METERS RACE.

CHARACTER PROFILE NO. 10

AYANO FUJIKAWA
(AGE 32)

DATE OF BIRTH—FEBRUARY 11 (AQUARIUS)
HEIGHT—5'3"
WEIGHT—100 LBS
MEASUREMENTS—35, 23, 36

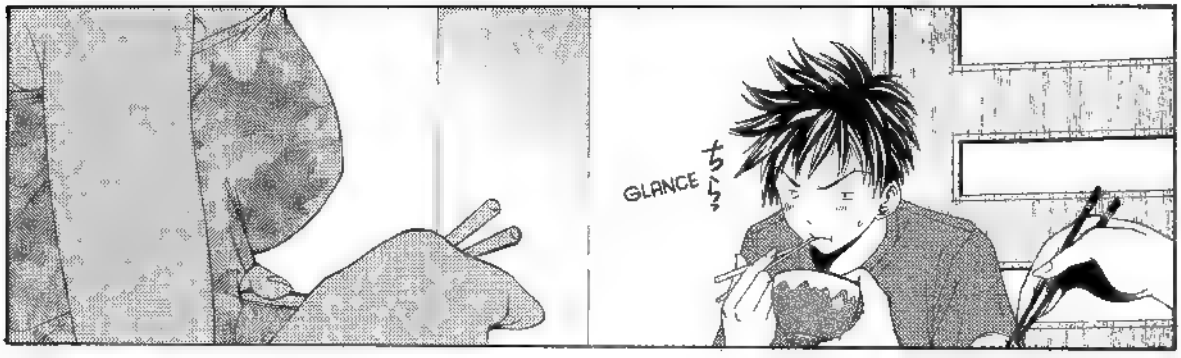
LIKES
- MIHO, YAMATO-KUN
- HOUSEWORK
- HER DECEASED HUSBAND

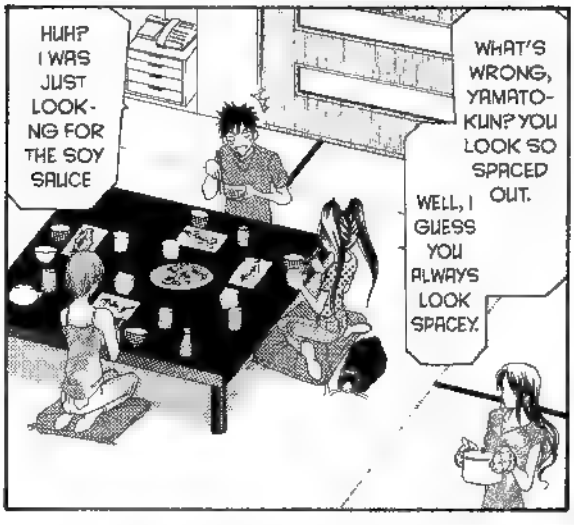
DISLIKES
- BEING UNPRODUCTIVE
- PLACES WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE HANG OUT
- BEING CALLED "LADY"

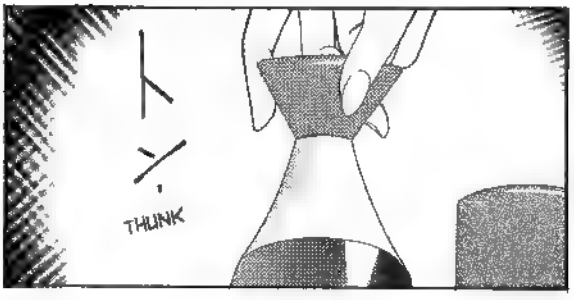
GOAL—TO FIND A HUSBAND FOR MIHO

#29 AN UPSWING

CLINK
カチャ
カチャ
CLINK
カチャ


GLANCE
ちら?


HUH? I WAS JUST LOOKING FOR THE SOY SAUCE
WHAT'S WRONG, YAMATO-KUN? YOU LOOK SO SPACED OUT.
WELL, I GUESS YOU ALWAYS LOOK SPACEY.


トン
THUNK

I DON'T THINK SHE'S MAD AT ME ANYMORE, BUT...
I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO HER...

HERE'S...
...THE SOY SAUCE.
SPLASH
...MAYBE EVERY-THING WILL GO BACK TO NORMAL.
SO IF I JUST START UP A CONVER-SATION...
OH, THANKS.
WHOA!
THAT'S WAY TOO MUCH SOY SAUCE, YAMATO-KUN.
I GUESS SHE'S NOT MAD ANY-MORE!
SORRY!
.....
YOU'RE GONNA KEEL OVER FROM HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE.

CLICK
ガチャ
AH...

H-HEY...
GOOD MORN-ING.

AH.
CLOP
カン
GOOD MORN-ING.
CLOP
カン

SHE DOESN'T HATE ME.
I'VE JUST GOTTA ACT CASUAL.

STEP
STEP
SURE IS HOT TODAY.
IT FEELS JUST LIKE SUMMER.
HEY.
YOU'RE COMING TO PRACTICE TODAY, RIGHT?
HUH? YEAH, I'LL BE THERE.
OH YEAH?

WAIT...
WE'D BETTER HURRY, OR WE'LL BE LATE.
.....
UH...
UM...
I GUESS SHE IS STILL MAD...
.....
1-C
I DON'T GET HER AT ALL...

SIGH...
KNOW THAT AKITSUKI-KUN LIKES ASAHINA-SAN, BUT...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING, YOU IDIOT?
BUT...
WHY DID ASAHINA-SAN YELL LIKE THAT AT THE RACE?
WAS IT JUST BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T WANT OUR SCHOOL TO LOSE?
.....
OR...

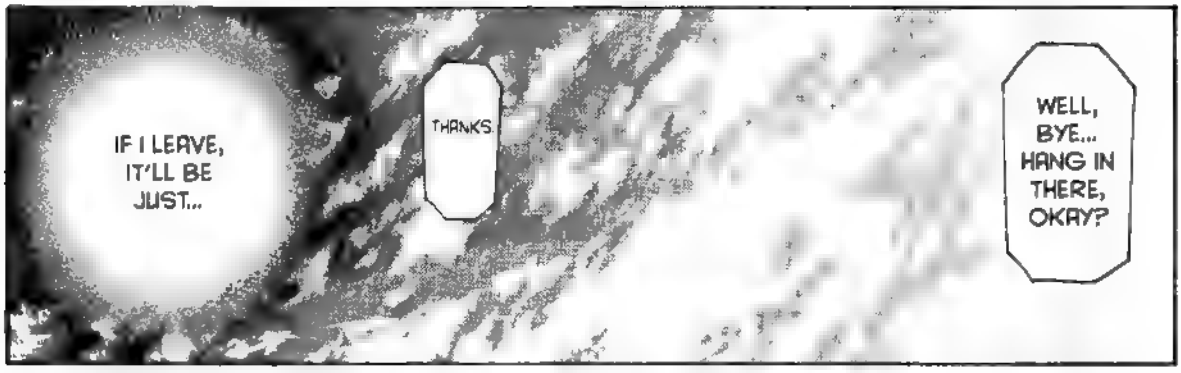
DOES SHE FEEL THE SAME WAY I DO ABOUT AKITSUKI-KUN?
OKAY, THAT'S IT FOR TODAY!
THANKS!
GOOD WORK, AKITSUKI-KUN!
HERE'S A TOWEL.
THANKS.
PHEW... FINALLY!
YOU'RE SO NICE, HONOKA-CHAN.
HUH? J-JUST DOING MY JOB.

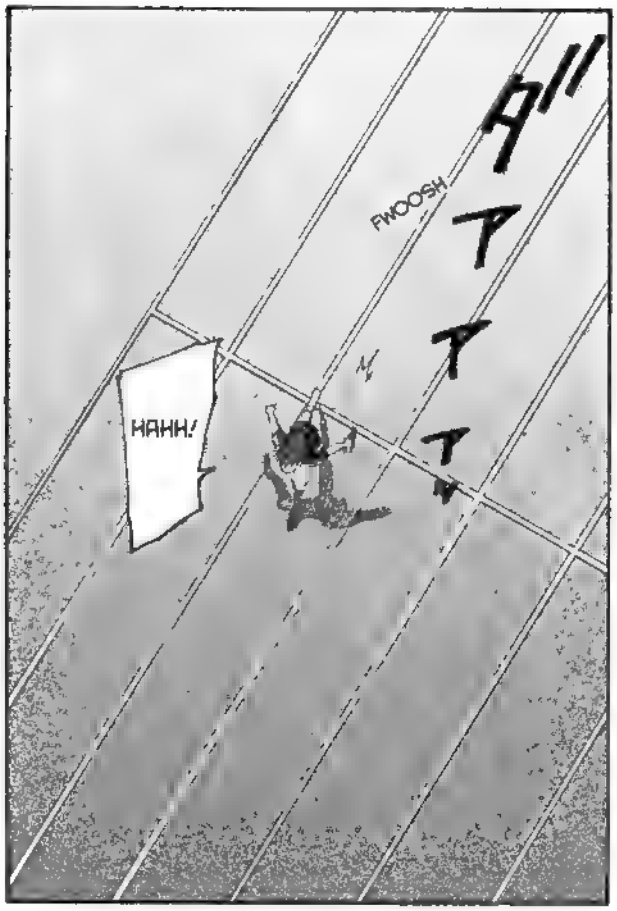
HUH? YOU NEED A TOWEL, KOBAYAKAWA?
HEY...IS SHE JUST GONNA IGNORE ME?
TRACK SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT KENJI KOBAYAKAWA KJN TOOK FIRST PLACE IN THE 200-METER SPRINT
DO YOU WANT SOMETHING TO DRINK, AKITSUKI-KUN?
HEY, MANAGER. WHERE'S MY TOWEL?
AH.
UM, AKITSUKI-KUN?
FWIP
WELL, TIME TO GO HOME.
UM, IF YOU DON'T MIND...
YEAH?
I'D LIKE YOU TO WALK ME HOME...
FWUMP

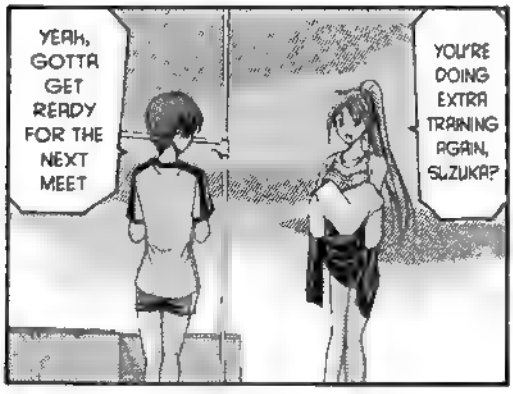
I CAN'T RUN ANY-MORE!
PUNISH-MENT FOR WHAT?
HUH?
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANY WHERE. THIS WEEK, YOU'RE DOING TWENTY SPRINTS AFTER EVERY PRACTICE. THAT'S YOUR PUNISHMENT
CRACK
CRACK
I'M THORRY! I WERMEMBER NOW! I'M WEALLY THORRY!
DO I HAVE TO SPELL IT OUT FOR YOU?
HUH?
SHUDDER
YES, SIR
NO HALF -ASSED RUNNING!
AND WATCH YOUR FORM OUT THERE.

NO, HE'S JUST A BULLY.
THAT'S NOT TRUE. JUST HANG IN THERE, AKITSUKI-KUN.
B-BECAUSE HE KNOWS YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A GREAT ATHLETE!
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
SHIT! WHY AM I THE ONLY ONE HE PICKS ON? STUPID, MACHO JERK!
HA, HA. YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT. JUST GO ON HOME.
B-BUT...
I-I'LL...
...WAIT FOR YOU RIGHT HERE...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I WON'T SKIP PRACTICE ANYMORE!
OKAY?

THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT...
OKAY...

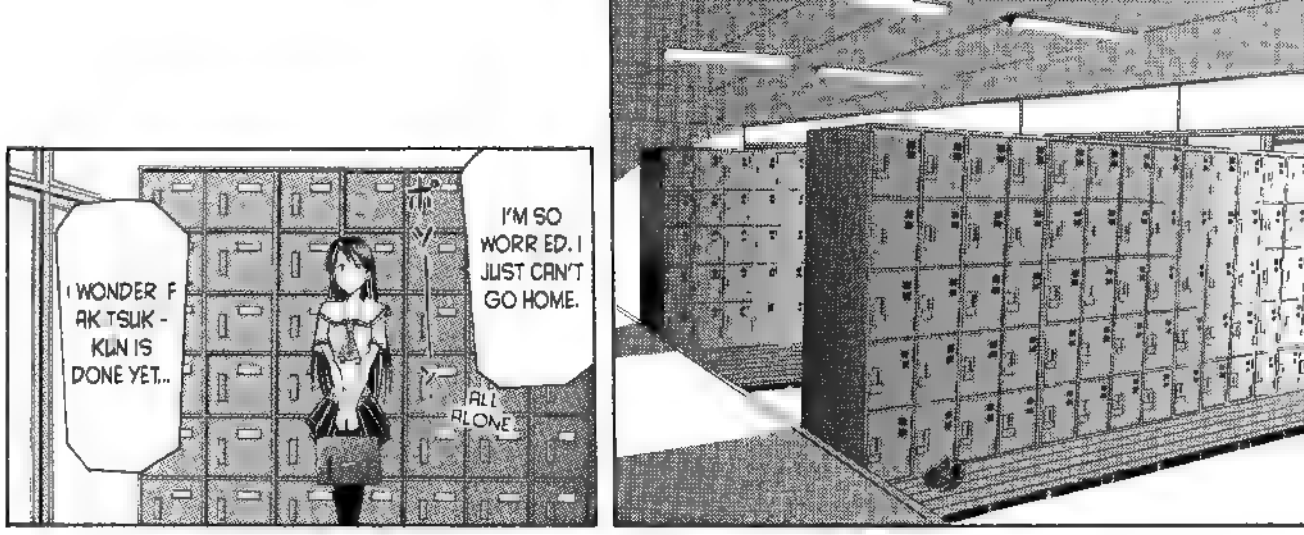

IF I LEAVE, IT'LL BE JUST...
THANKS.
WELL, BYE... HANG IN THERE, OKAY?


FWOOSH
HAHH!


YEAH, GOTTA GET READY FOR THE NEXT MEET
YOU'RE DOING EXTRA TRAINING AGAIN, SUZUKA?

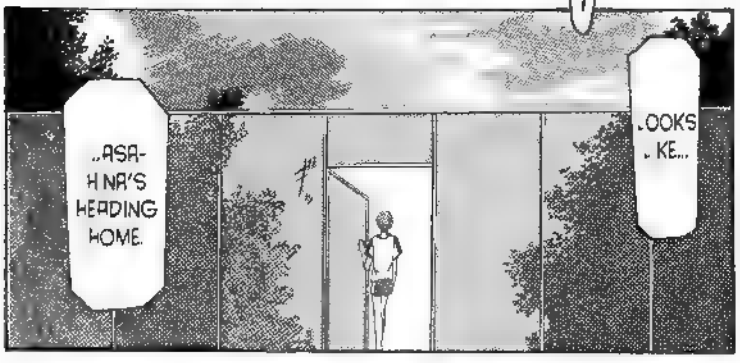
...ASAHINA-SAN AND AKITSUKI-KUN ALL ALONE TOGETHER.

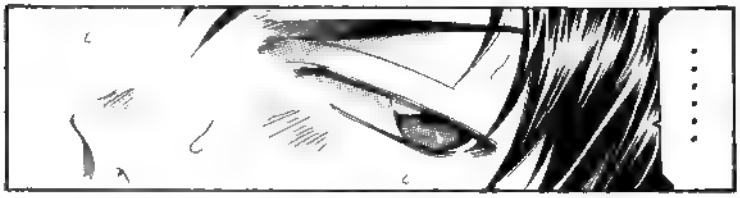
-AHH.
HAHH.
PHEW.
LOOKS LIKE ASAHINA'S DOING EXTRA TRAINING AGAIN.
AS LONG AS IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US HERE, I MIGHT AS WELL TALK TO HER.
OF COURSE, SHE'LL PROBA-BLY JUST IGNORE ME, BUT...
I CAN'T TELL IF SHE'S MAD OR IF SHE JUST DOESN'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT ME.
GOD, I'M SUCH AN IDIOT.


I WONDER IF AKITSUKI-KUN IS DONE YET...
I'M SO WORRIED. I JUST CAN'T GO HOME.
ALL ALONE

MAYBE I'LL GO OUT AND CHECK ON HIM ONE MORE TIME.
.....

PANT
I...
I FINALLY FINISHED.


PANT
..ASAHINA'S HEADING HOME.
..OOKS ..KE..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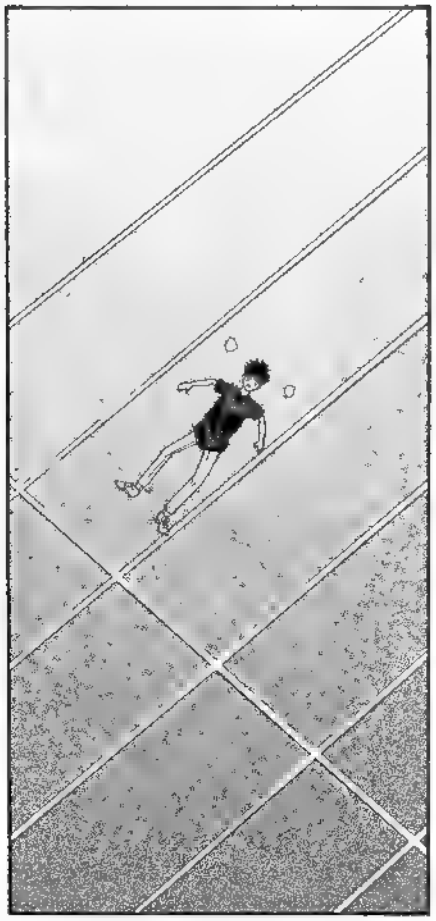


ALL YOU CARE ABOUT IS THE HIGH JUMP!
SHIT! YOU COULD AT LEAST SAY GOOD-BYE!
FWUP
WELL, EXCUSE ME!
HUH?
SWIP
THERE'S SOME-THING I FORGOT TO TELL YOU.
!?
ASAHINA!
I THOUGHT YOU WENT HOME.
SHOCK
WHAT?

OUCH!
CRACK
ピキッ
YANK
URRMPH!
MAKE SURE YOU STRETCH PROPERLY AFTER EVERY PRACTICE!
YOU ALWAYS HALF-ASS YOUR WAY THROUGH THE COOL-DOWN.
THAT'S...
...WHAT YOU FOR-GOT TO TELL ME?

BY THE TIME YOU HIT TOP SPEED, YOUR FORM IS ALWAYS WAY OFF.
YOU KEEP PUSH-ING TOO HARD WHEN YOU START YOUR SPRINT.
OUCH!
SQUEEZE
THAT'S NOT THE ONLY THING

YOU'D BETTER WORK ON YOUR FORM.
I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU RUN FOR A WHILE NOW
.....

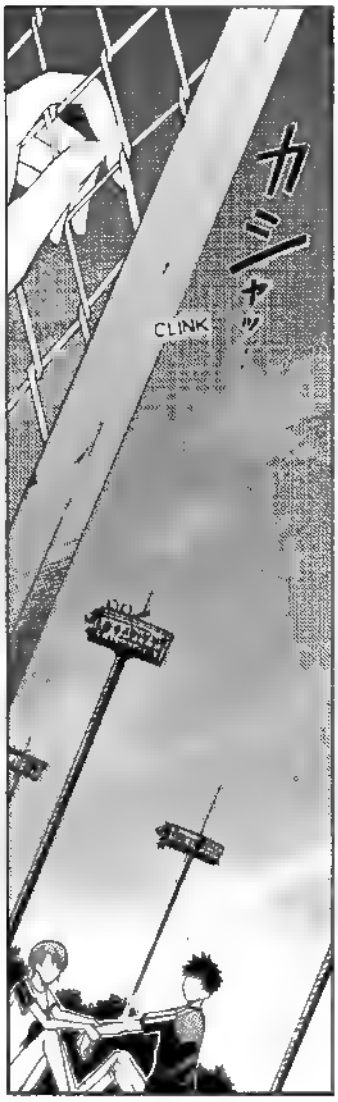
OH, YEAH...OF COURSE!
IT'S JUST YOU AND ME!
WHO ELSE WOULD I WATCH? YOU'RE THE ONLY OTHER PERSON HERE.

Y-YOU'VE BEEN...
...WATCH-ING ME?

WHOA!
SO ASAHI-NA'S ACTU-ALLY BEEN THINKING ABOUT ME.

THINGS AREN'T QUITE LIKE THEY USED TO BE, BUT...
THIS IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

AH.

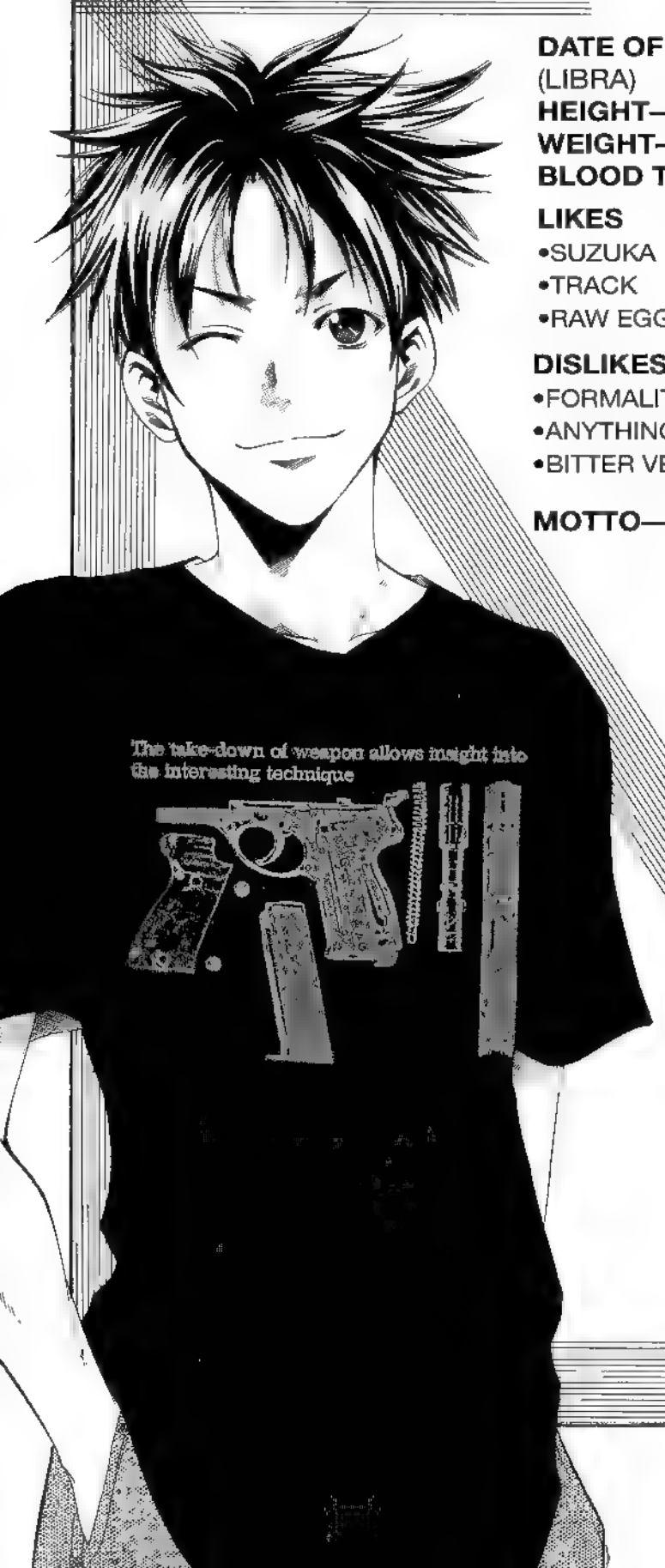

カシャッ
CLINK

UH... UM... I FORGOT SOMETHING.
SO I FIGURED I'D STOP BY AND SAY HI.
OH, I JUST FINISHED.

HUH? HONOKA-CHAN?
I THOUGHT YOU WENT HOME.

I WAS JUST GIVING YOU SOME ADVICE... FROM ONE ATHLETE TO ANOTHER.
ASAHINA WAS JUST TELLING ME ABOUT HOW MUCH I SUCK.
APPAR-ENTLY I CAN'T RUN WORTH SHIT!
THAT'S RIGHT...
O-OH...
.....
WELL, I'M GOING HOME. SEE YOU, GUYS.
I GUESS ASAHINA-SAN IS JUST LIKE THE CAPTAIN...
OKAY, BYE.
SHE JUST WANTS AKITSUKI-KUN TO BE THE BEST ATHLETE HE CAN BE.
SO I GUESS...
...SHE DOESN'T FEEL THE SAME WAY I DO.

CHARACTER PROFILE NO. 11



KAZUKI TSUDA
(DIED AT AGE 15)

DATE OF BIRTH—SEPTEMBER 29 (LIBRA)
HEIGHT—5'7"
WEIGHT—140 LBS
BLOOD TYPE—B

LIKES
- SUZUKA
- TRACK
- RAW EGGS

DISLIKES
- FORMALITIES
- ANYTHING HARD
- BITTER VEGETABLES

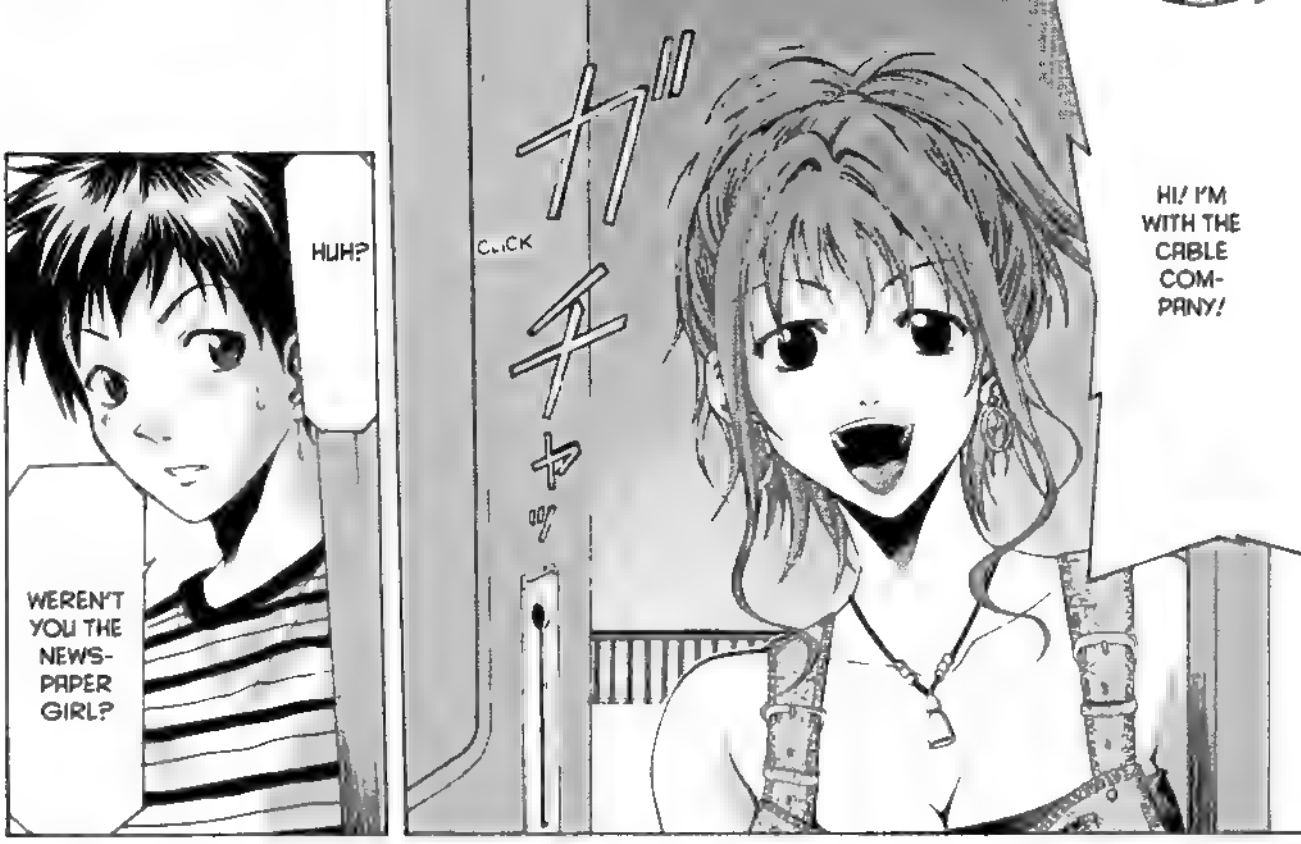
MOTTO—PROBLEMS BEGET SOLUTIONS

OKAY, THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY!
THWUMP
HUH?
YOU MADE IT THROUGH A WEEK WITHOUT SKIPPING PRACTICE AKITSUKI
I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU ALL WEEK
YEAH, WELL ASAHINA GAVE ME A LOT OF ADVICE AND STUFF
WAIT, YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING ME?
A DAY OFF...
NO PRACTICE THIS SUNDAY
YOU CAN TAKE THE DAY OFF.
YES, SIR

SUZUKA

#30 LINE OF FOCUS

301
YAMATO AK
ASAHIYU BATHS
A DAY OFF...
EVERY TIME SHE HAS A DAY OFF, SHE COMES HERE TO PRAY.
IT'S BEEN ABOUT TWO YEARS...
FLAP
バサッ
DING DONG
ピンポーン
HUH?
...KAZUKI TSUDA'S GRAVE AGAIN.
I GUESS ASAHINA WILL BE HEADING OUT TO VISIT...


HUH?
WEREN'T YOU THE NEWS-PAPER GIRL?
CLICK
カチャ
HI! I'M WITH THE CABLE COM-PANY!

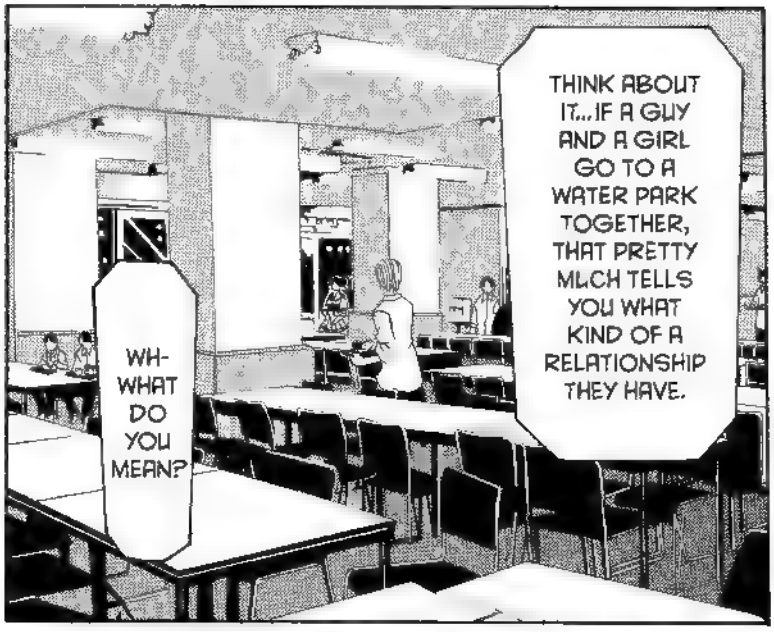
WELL, I DON'T REALLY WATCH CABLE, SO...
NO KID-DING.
CREAK
I'VE GOT TWO JOBS!
YEAH, BUT TODAY I'M SELLING CABLE DOOR TO DOOR.

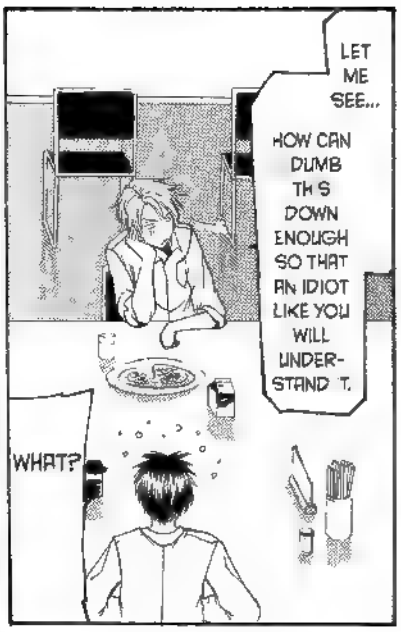
CREAK
NO, REALLY... I BARELY EVEN HAVE TIME TO READ MY NEWSPAPER.
BUT WAIT! THE CABLE IS ALREADY HOOKED UP. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SIGN UP
OKAY?
THUNK
ガゴン

IF YOU JOIN UP TODAY, YOU GET A FREE PAIR OF TICKETS TO A WATER PARK.
I ONLY HAVE TWO TICKETS LEFT!
FLIP
LIAR! I BET YOU'VE GOT TONS MORE.
YOU DON'T TRUST ANYONE, DO YOU?
NOT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME.
大和
BUT THINK ABOUT SIGN-ING UP, OKAY?
CLOP
CLOP
HEY, WAIT!
FINE! I'LL LET YOU HAVE THESE TICKETS.
GO HAVE SOME FUN WITH YOUR GIRL-FRIEND.
BUT I DON'T EVEN HAVE A GIRL-FRIEND.

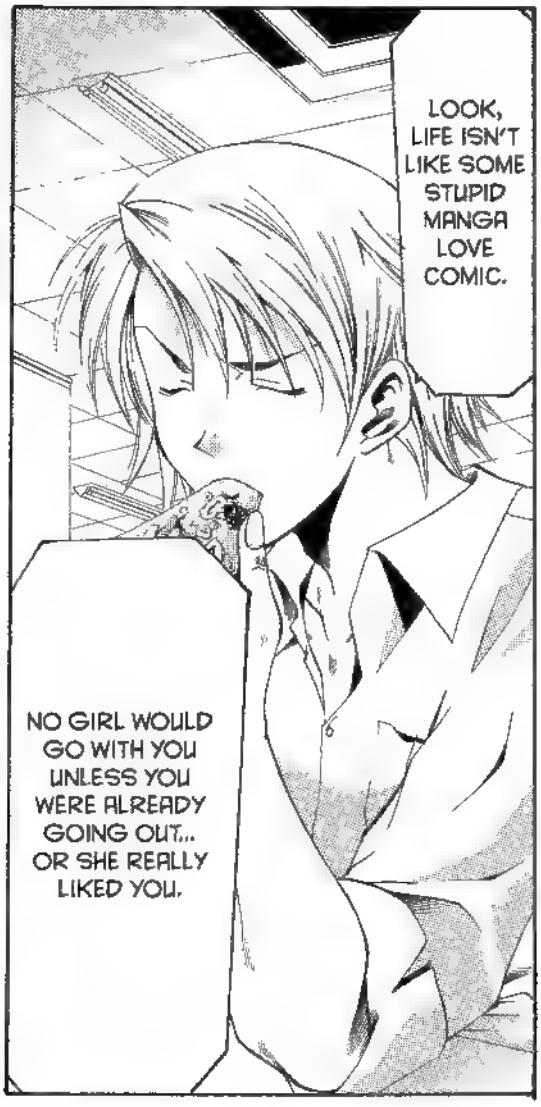
THAT GIRL GAVE ME TWO TICKETS TO AN AMUSEMENT PARK, AND I TOOK ASAHINA.
WATER PARK
WATER PARK
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, THIS IS KIND OF LIKE WHAT HAPPENED LAST TIME...
I LOVE YOU, ASAHINA.
I...
AND I ENDED UP SAYING...
I'M SORRY
ASAHIYU BATHS
LIKE HELL I'M GOING!
THESE TICKETS ARE CURSED!
DRIP
DRIP

キーン コーン...
AWW?
A WATER PARK?
YEAH
ABOU' YOU INVITING SUZUKA HRN?
WHA' DO YOU THINK?
YEAH


THINK ABOUT IT...IF A GUY AND A GIRL GO TO A WATER PARK TOGETHER, THAT PRETTY MUCH TELLS YOU WHAT KIND OF A RELATIONSHIP THEY HAVE.
WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


LET ME SEE...
HOW CAN I DUMB THIS DOWN ENOUGH SO THAT AN IDIOT LIKE YOU WILL UNDERSTAND IT.
WHAT?

I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT.
.....

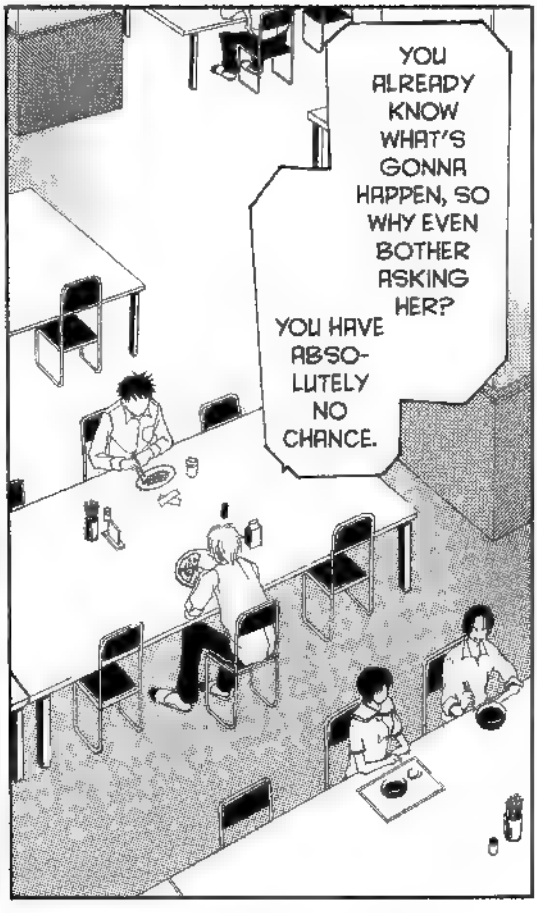

LOOK, LIFE ISN'T LIKE SOME STUPID MANGA LOVE COMIC.
NO GIRL WOULD GO WITH YOU UNLESS YOU WERE ALREADY GOING OUT... OR SHE REALLY LIKED YOU.

BESIDES, YOU ALREADY WENT OUT WITH HER ONCE, AND GOT SHOT DOWN.
YOU REALLY WANNA GO THROUGH THAT ALL OVER AGAIN?
.....
YOU'VE GOTTA LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES, MAN.

TELLING ME THAT AIN'T GONNA DO YOU ANY GOOD.
YEAH, BUT SWIMMING IS A GREAT WAY TO BUILD MUSCLES WITHOUT PUTTING TOO MUCH STRAIN ON YOUR BODY.
PLANS?
SHE PROBABLY...
AND YOU'RE JUST GONNA INVITE HER AT THE LAST MINUTE?
DON'T YOU THINK SUZUKA-CHAN ALREADY HAS PLANS FOR TOMORROW?

...DOES HAVE PLANS.
I BET SHE'S GOING TO VISIT KAZUKI TSUDA'S GRAVE...

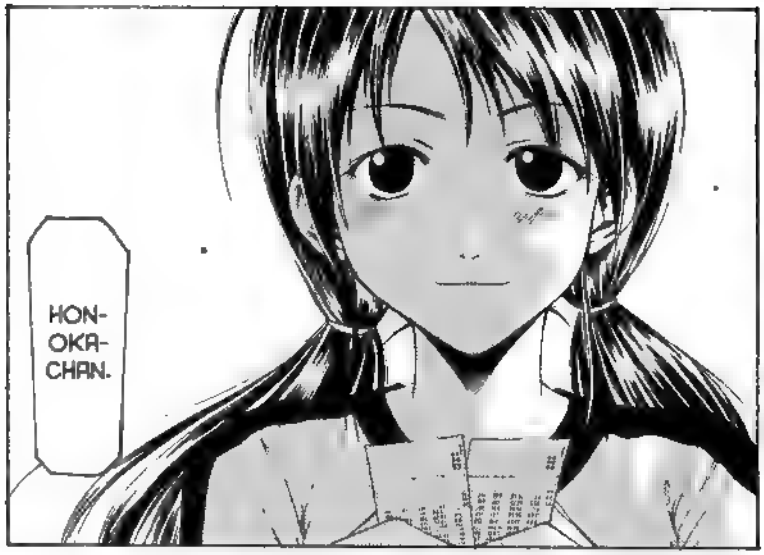
I KNOW.


YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN, SO WHY EVEN BOTHER ASKING HER?
YOU HAVE ABSO-LUTELY NO CHANCE.

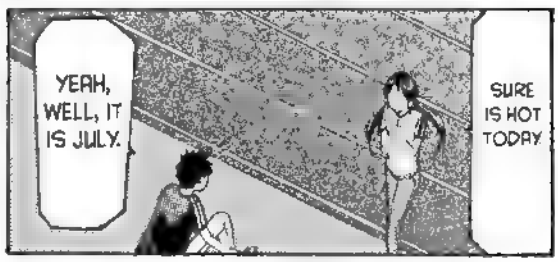
I GUESS I'LL JUST FORGET IT.
WATER PARK

I DON'T WANNA HEAR HER SAY, "I'VE GOT OTHER PLANS."

WHAT SHOULD I DO?
I'M GONNA BE SO BORED TOMOR-ROW.


HON-OKA-CHAN.

UH...UM... AKITSUKI-KUN/


YEAH, WELL, IT IS JULY.
SURE IS HOT TODAY

UH...
.....

?
YEAH, PROBABLY
I-IT'LL PROBABLY BE HOT TOMORROW, TOO.
FLAP
FLAP
DO YOU...IKE THE HEAT, AKITSUKI-KUN?
NO... NOT REALLY.
YOU SURE? WELL, OKAY THEN...
YANK
WH-WHAT? YEAH, I'M FINE.
OH, REALLY? ME NEI-THER. I CAN'T STAND IT!
ARE YOU OKAY, HONOKA-CHAN?
I WAS JUST..
?
WELL, ACTU-ALLY I...

I WAS WONDER-ING...
...IF YOU'D LIKE TO GO...
...TO THE WATER PARK WITH ME.

ME?
HUH?

HMM...

I-IF YOU CAN'T, IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
FLAPPA
FLAPPA
THE CABLE GIRL GAVE ME FREE TICKETS YESTER-DAY, SO...

HEY, WHAT'RE YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT?

YIPPEE!
I WANNA GO, TOO!

HEY, ARE THOSE TICKETS FOR THE NEW WATER PARK?
HASHIBA...
I HEARD THEY HAVE THIS REALLY HUGE WATER-SLIDE. ARE YOU GOING TOMORROW?

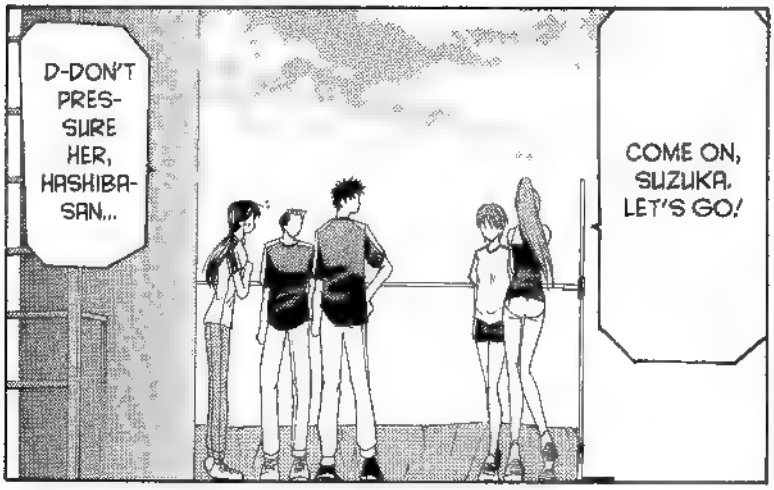
TAKE ME WITH YOU, AKIT-SUK!
I WANNA GO, TOO!

I JUST LOVE WATER PARKS!
HUH? B-BUT I WAS...
HOP-ING TO GO WITH AKIT-SUK-KUN...

HUH?
SHOCK
SORRY, WHO ARE YOU AGA N?
TRACK SCHO_ARSH P STUDENT KEN. I KOBAYAKAWA-KUN TOOK FIRST PLACE N THE 200-METER SPR NT

I NEVER SAID I WAS GOING...
W-WAIT!
IF ALL FOUR OF US GO, IT'LL BE REALLY FUN.
AH...
KASHIBA! WAIT!
WHOOSH
COME TO THE WATER PARK WITH US TOMORROW, SUZUKA!
WATER PARK?
SUZUKA!

YEAH, THE FOUR OF US ARE GOING TOMORROW. WANNA COME ALONG?
HUH?
THE MORE THE MERRIER.


COME ON, SUZUKA. LET'S GO!
D-DON'T PRES-SURE HER, HASHIBA-SAN...

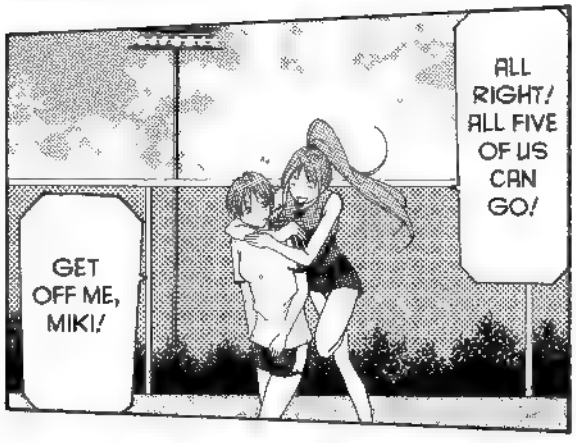
A-ASAHINA-SAN TOO?

SHE'LL NEVER GO ANY-WAY.

YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN, SO WHY EVEN BOTHER ASKING HER?
YOU HAVE ABSO-LUTELY NO CHANCE.

...SHE'LL BE AT TSUDA'S TOMORROW...
I KNOW...
チラッ...
GLANCE

HUH?


ALL RIGHT! ALL FIVE OF US CAN GO!
GET OFF ME, MIKI!

D-DID SHE DECIDE TO GO...
...BE-CAUSE OF ME?

SURE... SOUNDS LIKE FUN.

NAH...
OF COURSE NOT.
WHA-
EVER...
IT MIGHT NOT BE SUCH A BORING FUN

CHARACTER PROFILE NO. 12

EMERSON ARIMA
(HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE)

DATE OF BIRTH—JULY 7 (CANCER)
HEIGHT—5'9"
WEIGHT—158 LBS
BLOOD TYPE—A

LIKES
- TRACK
- FISH *AQUA PAZZA*
- *SHIROI KOIBITO* COOKIES

DISLIKES
- KAZUKI TSUDA
- BEING TOLD WHAT TO DO
- PICKLES

GOAL—TO RUN THE 100-METER DASH IN UNDER TEN SECONDS

WOO
WOO
I SWEAR SHE LOOKED AT ME RIGHT BEFORE SHE DECIDED TO COME ALONG.
GLANCE
THOUGHT
MAYBE...
SHE WANTED TO GO WITH ME!
...ASAHINA ALWAYS SPENT HER DAYS OFF VISITING KAZUKI'S GRAVE. SO WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE AT THE WATER PARK?
FWAH
SORRY I TOOK SO LONG.

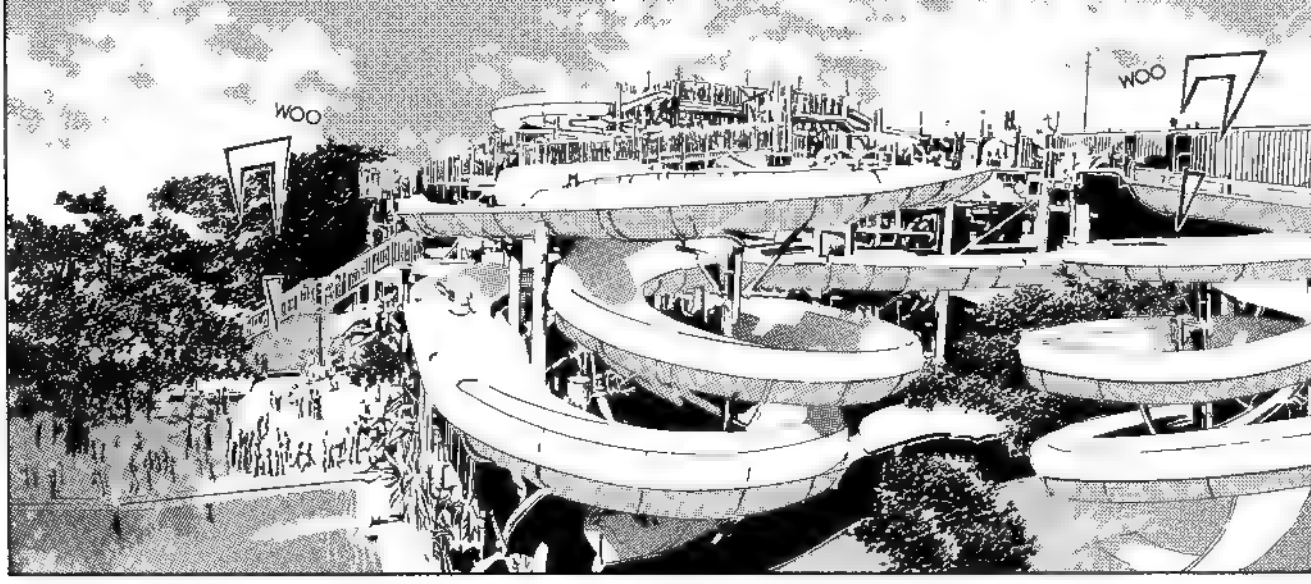
SUZUKA

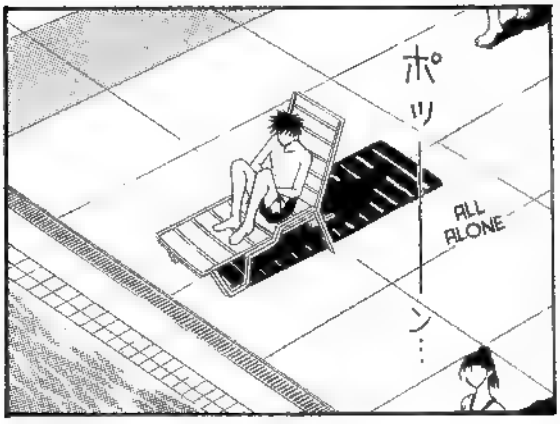
#31 FIREWORKS

A-ASA-HINA'S BOOBS...
...ARE ACTUALLY PRETTY BIG...
STARE
WHOA!
KENJI KOBAYAKAWA-KUN (YOU KNOW THE REST)
QUIT STARING!
TCH...
I'M NOT STARING.
GLARE
THUMP
THUMP
AKITSUKI-KUN IS LOOKING AT ME.
YOU'RE SUCH A SICKO.
YOU LITTLE PERVERT, AKITSUKI!
I WASN'T STARING!
QUIT CALLING ME A PERVERT!

PUT ON YOUR HOTTEST BIKINI, AND YOU'LL KNOCK HIM DEAD.
WELL, THERE MUST BE A CUTE GUY YOU COULD INVITE.
THANKS FOR THE TICKETS, BUT I DON'T EVEN HAVE ANYONE TO GO WITH...
REALLY?
I EVEN BOUGHT A NEW BIKINI.
I'LL DO MY BEST!
I'VE GOTTA GET BACK IN THE GAME.
MAYBE SUZUKA CAME BECAUSE SHE WANTED TO SPEND TIME WITH ME.
QUIT RUN-NING! YOU'LL SLIP, MIKI!
WE'VE GOTTA HURRY BEFORE IT GETS TOO CROWDED.
HEY, SUZUKA! LET'S GO ON THE WATER-SLIDE.
WHAT?
IT'S THE WORLD'S TALLEST!
AH!

GLANCE ちら
AH... COME WITH US, AKITSUKI-KUN.
COME ON, SAKURAI. LET'S GO!
YANK ガシ
HUH?
THERE'S A POOL OVER THERE.
COME ON!
B-BUT...
UH... THAT'S OKAY.
I'LL JUST HANG OUT HERE.
I'VE GOTTA FIND A WAY...
...TO GET CLOSER TO ASAHINA.


WOO
WOO


ALL ALONE

IT'S BEEN AN HOUR.
HOW MANY T MES CAN THEY SLIDE DOWN THAT TH NG?

THEY'RE HAVING WAY TOO MUCH FUN.
SHT

MAYBE YOUR BUTT IS JUST TOO BIG, MIKI.
MY BIKINI KEEPS RIDING UP.
SPLASH

AH... THERE HE IS!
YOINK
YOINK
AKIT-SUKI-KUN!
WHOOSH
HON-OKA-CHAN.
A-AREN'T YOU GONNA SWIM, AKITSUKI-KUN?
IT'S REALLY FUN.
NO, I'LL JUST HANG OUT HERE.
GLANCE

HE WANTS TO STAY NEAR ASAHINA-SAN.
HERE GOES....
.....
H-HEY, AKIT-SUKI-KUN.
HUH?
DO YOU THINK MY BIKINI IS TOO SMALL?
IT FEELS A LITTLE TIGHT IN THE CHEST...

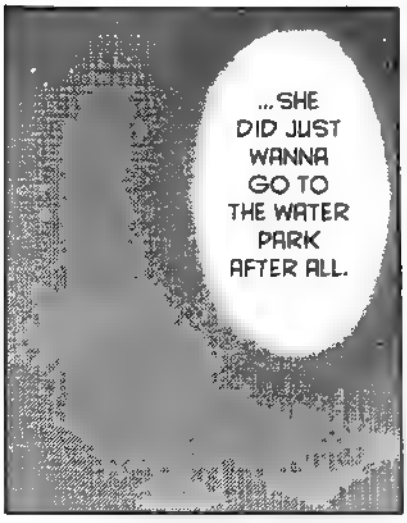
WHOOSH
OH, THERE YOU ARE, SAKURAI.
HUH?
LET'S GO CHECK OUT THE WATER-SLIDE.
UH... I...
WHAT?
HE DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE ME.
AH! A BUG JUST FLEW IN MY EYE!
W-WAIT, KOBAY-AKAWA-KUN!
YANK
COME ON, HURRY!
PLUP
NOW'S MY CHANCE!
ASAHINA'S COMING OVER HERE ALL BY HERSELF!
HUH?
RUB

THUMP
MAYBE SHE'LL WANNA COME WITH ME.
THUMP
UH...
AH... ASAHINA! I'M GOING TO GET A SODA. WANT ONE?

HUH?
FWUP
I'M THIRSTY, TOO, AKITSUKI! GET ME A COLA.

OKAY.
LET'S HAVE A DRINK, AND THEN GO CHECK OUT THE WAVE POOL.

HURRY IT UP! WHAT DO YOU WANT, SUZUKA?
UH... I'LL HAVE A MELON SODA.
OKAY.


...SHE DID JUST WANNA GO TO THE WATER PARK AFTER ALL.

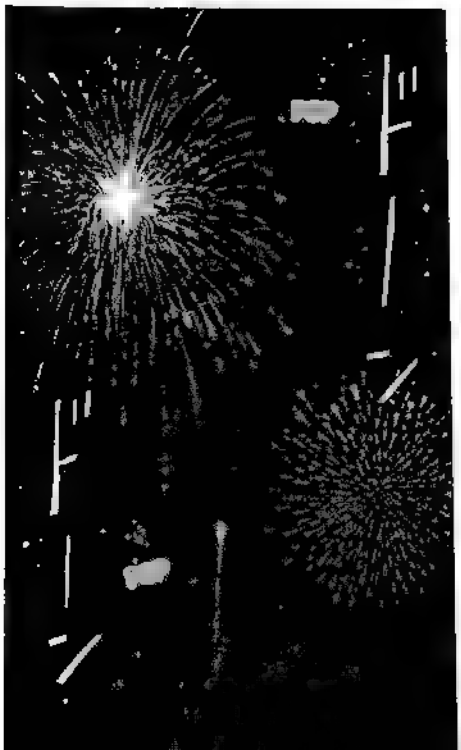
.....
OH, MAYBE...

WAHH! THAT WAS SO AWE-SOME! I HAD SO MUCH FUN!
ME
SUGER BABY
WHOA
AH!

SOME FRIENDS THEY ARE.
NONE OF THEM EVEN NOTICED THAT I'M STILL OVER HERE.
ASAHINA...
. . . .
IS SHE WAITING FOR ME?
S-SORRY

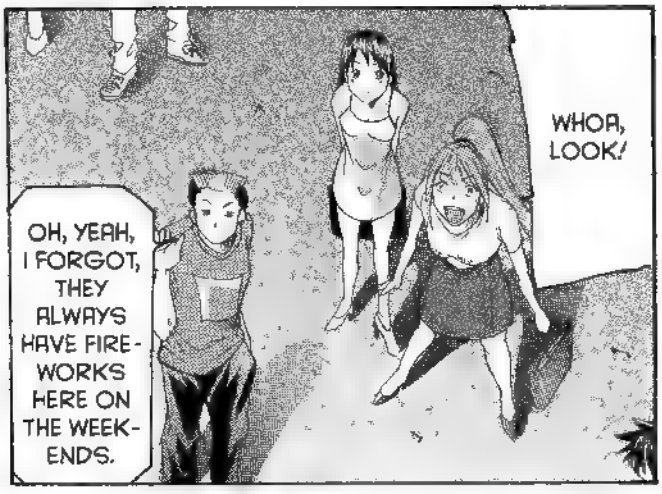
HUH?
STEP
STEP
UM...
STEP
STEP
FWOOSH
H-HEY, ARE YOU—

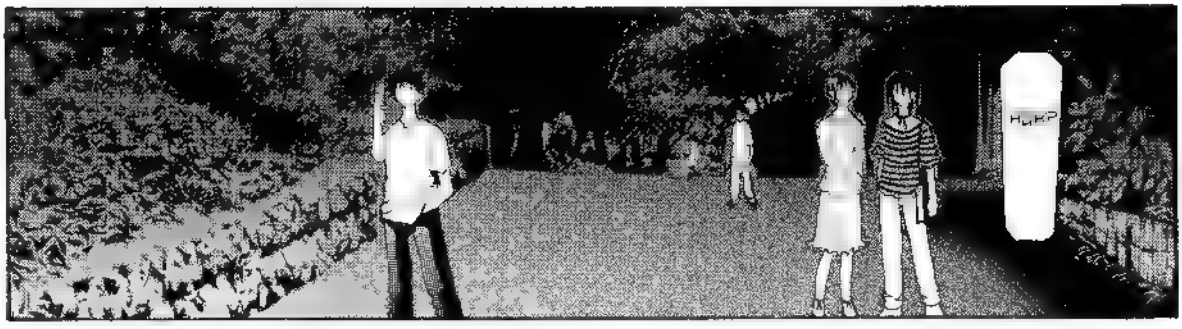
ドォ
POP
オ
オ
オ


ドーン
ドーン

WOW!
WHAT THE—?

AREN'T THEY PRETTY, AKITSUKI-KUN?


WHOA, LOOK!
OH, YEAH, I FORGOT, THEY ALWAYS HAVE FIRE-WORKS HERE ON THE WEEK-ENDS.


HUH?

POP
POP

AKIT-SUKI-KUN AND...
ASAHINA-SAN ARE GONE...

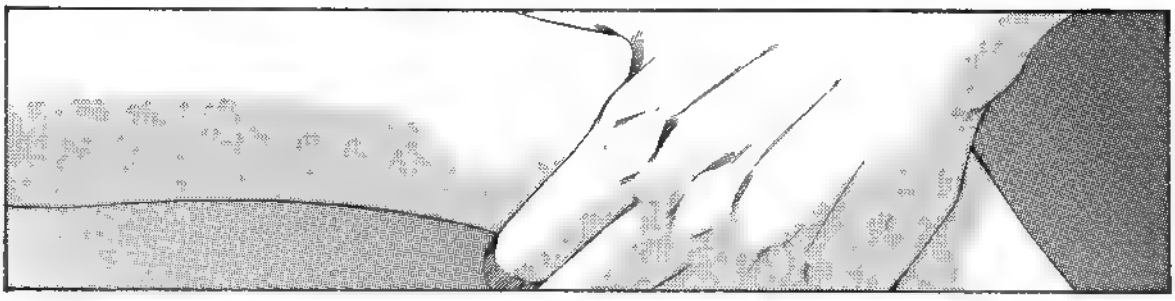
YEAH... FIRE-WORKS.
FIRE-WORKS.

TH-THEY'RE JUST LIKE
...THE FIRE-WORKS WE SAW WHEN WE WENT TO FANTASY LAND TOGETHER
KOU?
RH
N-NO, I MEAN...
O-OH NO! I CAN'T BE-LIEVE I JUST SAID THAT?
BE-BE-BE-
BE-BE-
BE-
THEY'RE PROB-ABLY LOOKING FOR US
BESIDES, YOU ALREADY WENT OUT WITH HER ONCE AND GOT SHOT DOWN
YOU REALLY WANNA GO THROUGH THAT AL-VER AGAIN?

THUMP
THUMP
ドクン
I...
THUMP
THUMP
ドクン

.....!

AH! THERE THEY ARE!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TWO DOING?



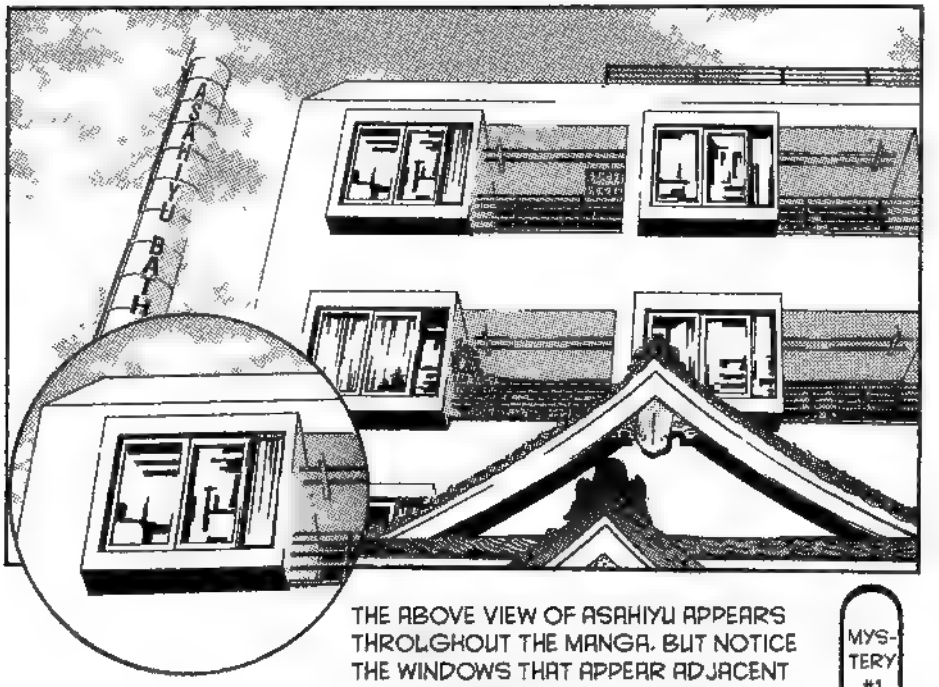
.....

SWIP
AH...

JESUS, AKIT-SUKI, YOU'RE LIKE A LITTLE KID!
SORRY.
COME ON, LET'S GO EAT.
SORRY. YAMATO-KUN'S SHOE-LACES CAME UNTIED.
GEEZ. WE'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU, GUYS
WHAT THE HECK WERE YOU DOING?
NOW SHE'S DEFI-NITELY GONNA HATE ME.
AH, TO HELL WITH IT!
WHO KNOWS WHAT SHE'S THINKING?

CONTINUED IN VOLUME 8

BONUS MANGA– S.M.R. (SUZUKA MYSTERY REPORT)



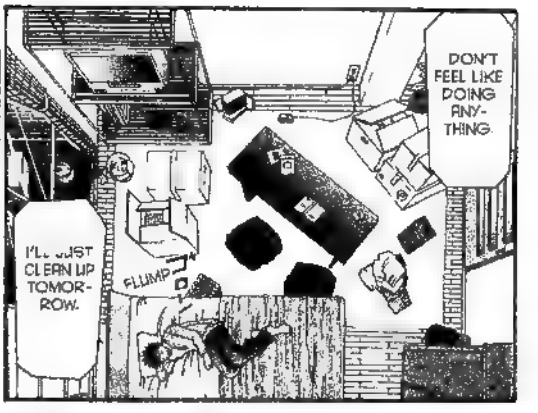
MYSTERY #1

THE ABOVE VIEW OF ASAHIYU APPEARS THROUGHOUT THE MANGA. BUT NOTICE THE WINDOWS THAT APPEAR ADJACENT TO THE VERANDA OF EACH ROOM. NO SUCH WINDOW IS VISIBLE INSIDE YAMATO'S ROOM. WHAT ON EARTH ARE THESE WINDOWS?

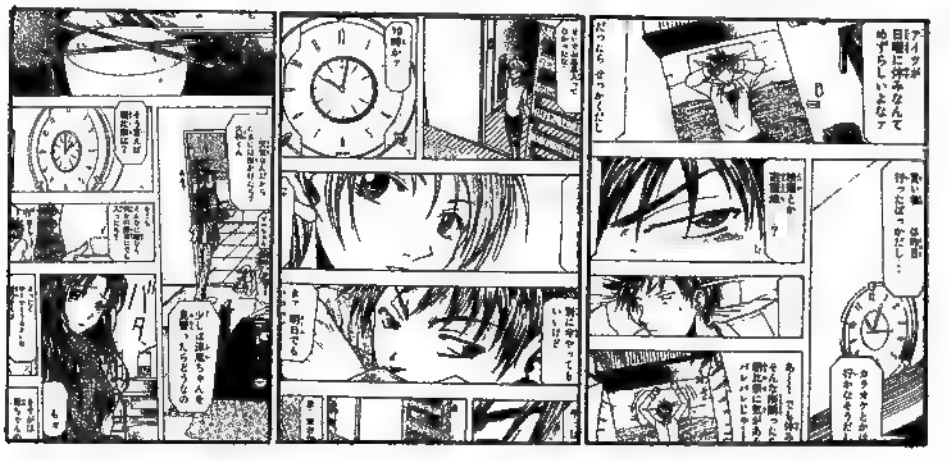
IT IS A MYSTERY INDEED.

MYSTERY #2

THE BOTTOM PANELS SHOW THE ROOMS OF YAMATO, SUZUKA, AND THE LANDLADY. WHY DOES EACH ROOM HAVE THE EXACT SAME CLOCK? IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THEY EACH, COINCIDENTALLY, PURCHASED THE SAME CLOCK. PERHAPS WE SHOULD ASSUME THAT THIS IS THE STANDARD ASAHIYU "WELCOME GIFT" GIVEN TO ALL NEW TENANTS.



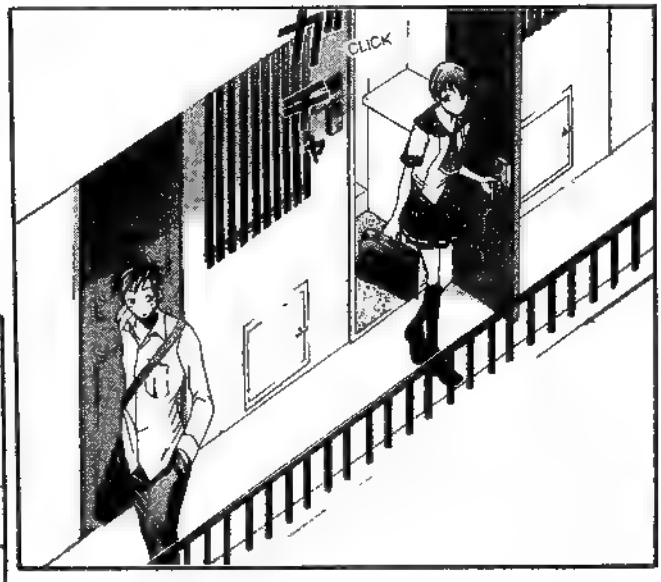
☆ YAMATO'S ROOM – YOU CAN'T SEE THE WINDOW.

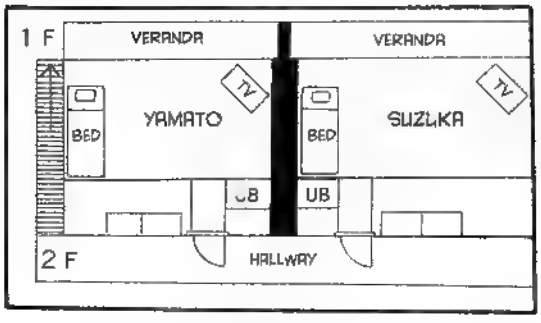


THE MYSTERIES OF THE ASAHIYU LADIES APARTMENT COMPLEX

THE PANEL ON THE RIGHT SHOWS YAMATO AND SUZUKA LEAVING FOR SCHOOL. BASED ON WHAT WE SEE IN THIS DRAWING, ONE WOULD ASSUME THAT THEIR ROOMS ARE LAID OUT IN THE MANNER SHOWN IN THE DIAGRAM BELOW.

MYSTERY #3





☆

HOWEVER, THROUGHOUT THE STORY, WE SEE YAMATO CRAWLING THROUGH THE HOLE IN THE WALL TO ENTER SUZUKA'S ROOM. THE HOLE IS SITUATED NEAR YAMATO'S BED, AND WHEN YAMATO GOES THROUGH THE HOLE, HE FINDS HIMSELF NEXT TO SUZUKA'S TV. ACCORDING TO THE DIAGRAM, CRAWLING THROUGH THE HOLE SHOULD PUT YAMATO RIGHT SMACK-DAB IN THE STAIRWELL.

PERHAPS THIS HOLE PASSES THROUGH ANOTHER DIMENSION TO END UP CONNECTING TO SUZUKA'S ROOM. WHO KNOWS, THE NEXT TIME YAMATO STEPS THROUGH THAT HOLE HE MIGHT END UP IN A WHOLE DIFFERENT WORLD.

RESEARCH BY THE SEO DANDY STUDIO

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

Suzukaze, page 5

The second character in Suzuka's name can be read as *ka* or *kaze*. *Kaze* means wind, so Kazuki jokingly calls Suzuka by the nickname Suzukaze.

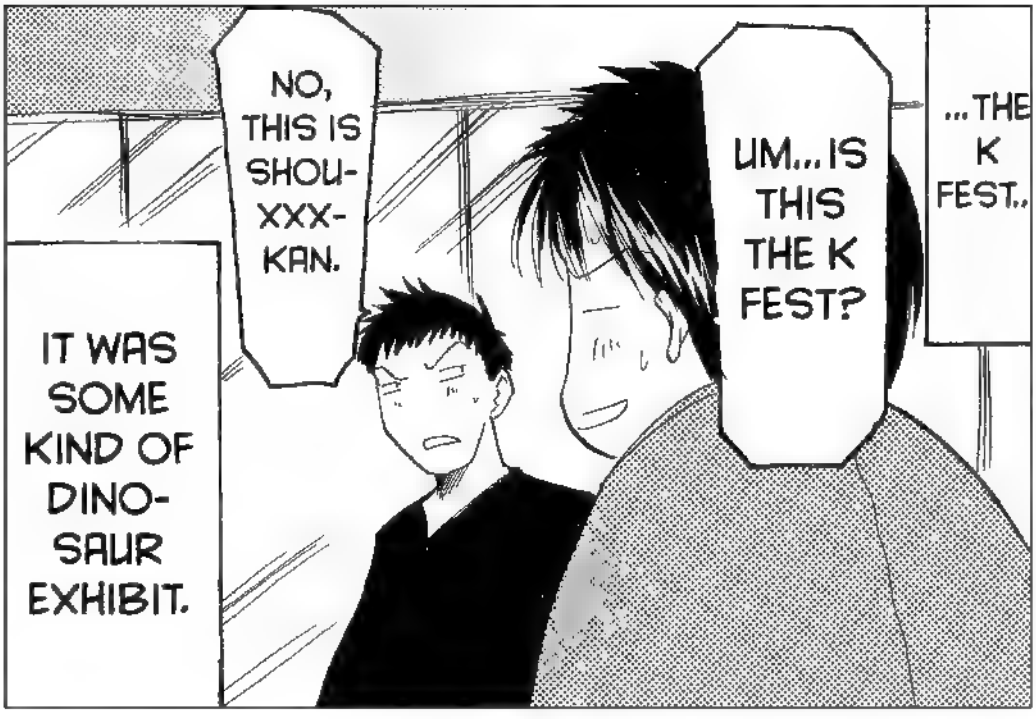
IF YOU PUT HER IN CHARGE, THE WHOLE TEAM WILL FALL APART.
SUZUKAZE CAN'T HANDLE THE PRESSURE.
KAZUKI TSUDA EIGHTH GRADER (AGE FOURTEEN)

Prefectural meet, page 6

Japan is divided into numerous prefectures that function something like states do in the United States.

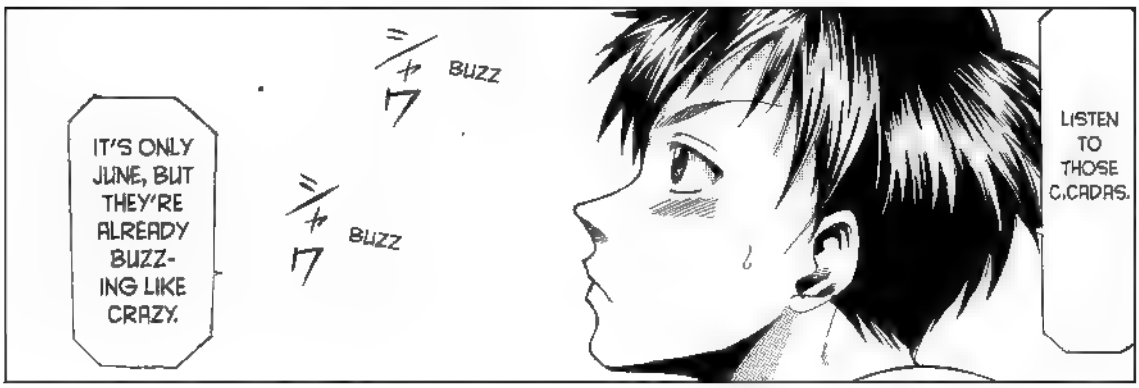
K fest and Shou-xxx-kan, page 22

K fest probably stands for Kodansha Fest. Kodansha is the Japanese publisher of *Suzuka.* Shou-xxx-kan is probably a reference to one of Kodansha's publishing competitors, Shougakkan. Shougakkan publishes manga and children's books. This was probably a dinosaur exhibit for kids that was sponsored by the publisher.



Cicadas, page 117

The loud chirping of the cicadas marks Japan's hot, humid summers.

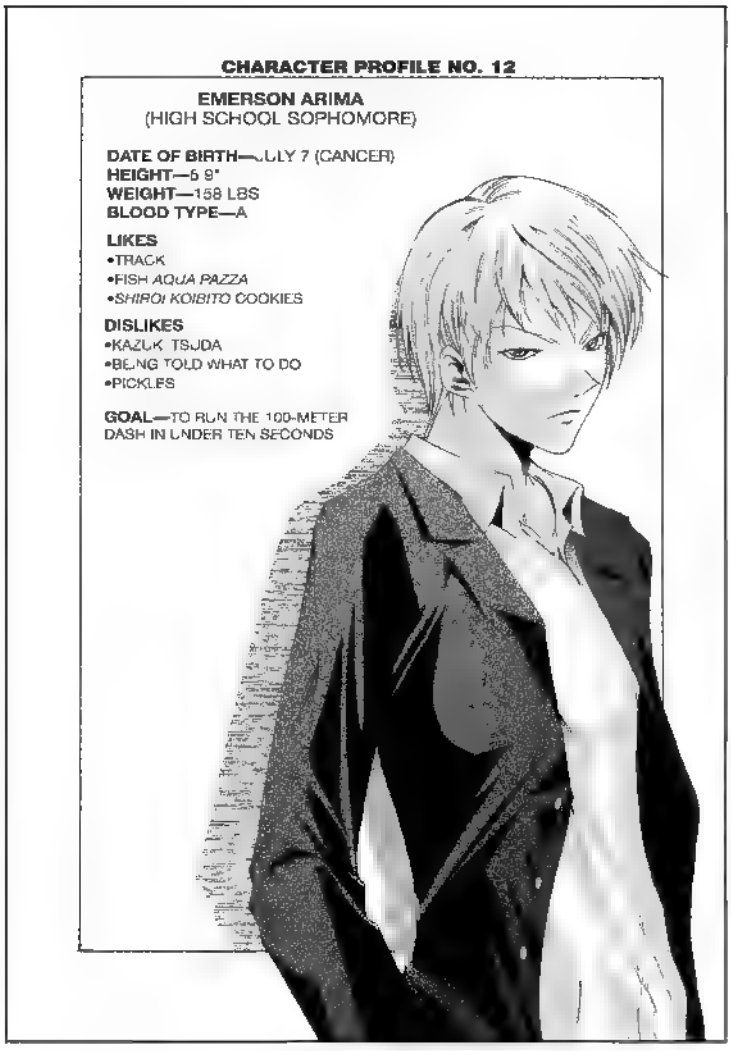


Cold Chinese noodles, page 149

Yamato is ordering *hiyashi chuuka* or cold Chinese-style noodles. This dish features noodles topped with cucumber, eggs, ham, and a sweet-and-sour sauce. It's a popular summer dish.

Aqua pazza and *shiroi koibito*, page 162

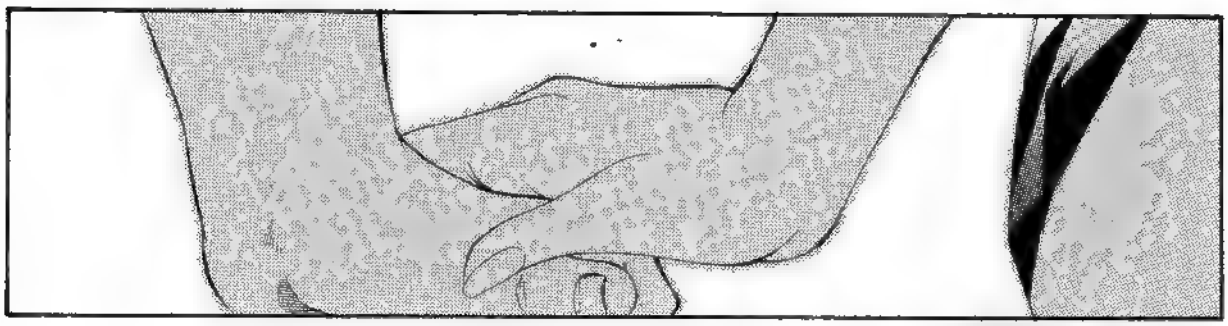
Aqua pazza is an Italian style of cooking fish. The fish is cooked in a broth of salted water with garlic and spices and then served in the broth. *Shiroi koibito* is a famous kind of cream-filled cookie from the Hokkaido region of Japan.

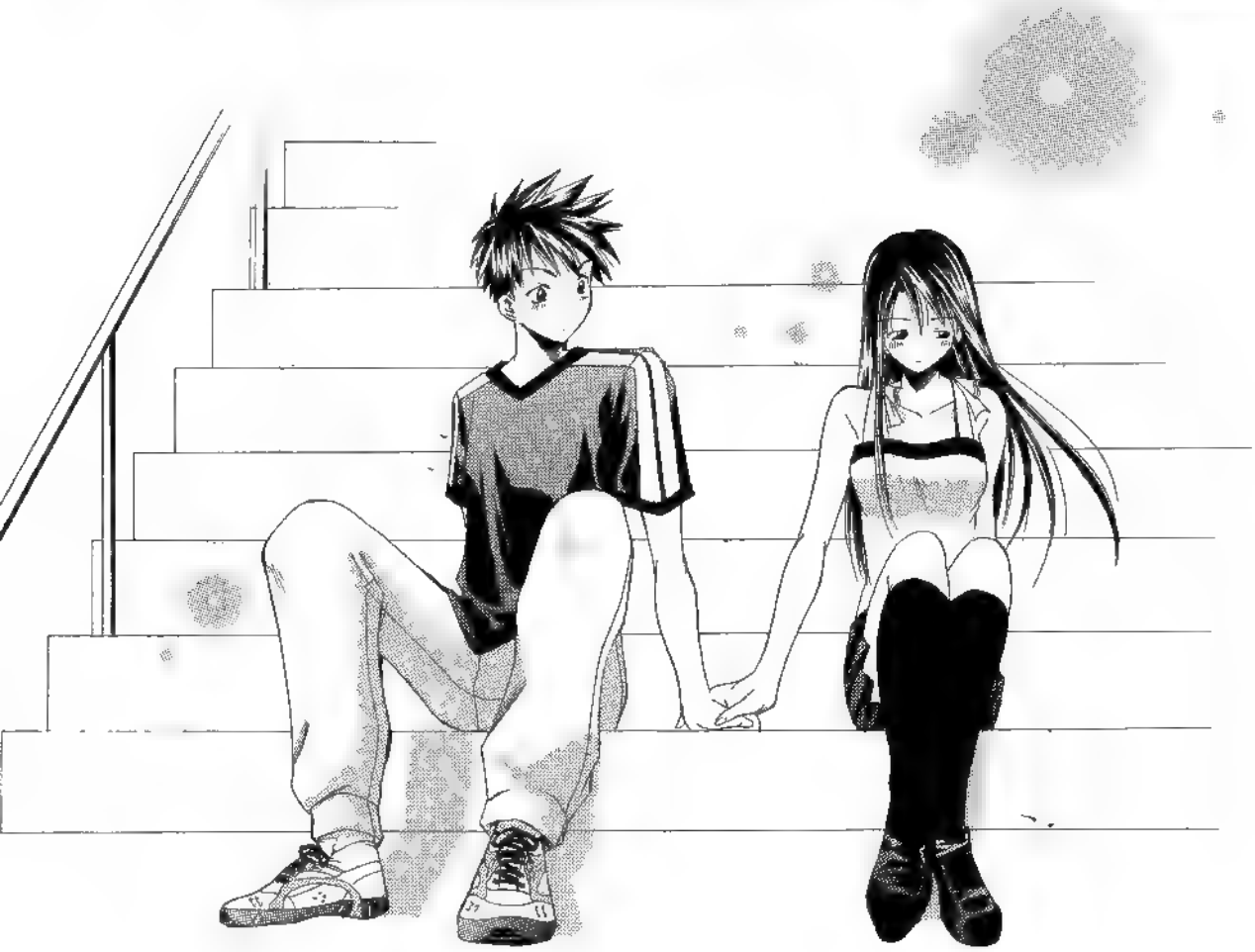


Preview of Volume 5

We're pleased to present you with a preview of *Suzuka,* Volume 5.
This volume is available now!

I MEAN, I JUST DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES.
I JUST THINK THE PEOPLE WHO MADE IT INTO THE I.H. ARE ON A TOTALLY DIFFERENT LEVEL.





YOU HAVE REAL TALENT, AKITSUKI-KUN!
THAT'S NOT TRUE...
HUH?
I THINK YOU'RE REALLY COOL.
I BET YOU'LL TAKE FIRST IN THE I.H. NEXT YEAR.
SOMETIMES I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE HOW FAST YOU ARE.
AND YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING UP WITH YOUR TRAINING JUST LIKE THE CAPTAIN ASKED.

.....
GOOD.
THIS IS ALL I ASK FOR...
.....
ニコッ
GRIN
JUST BEING ABLE TO SHARE A MOMENT ALONE WITH HIM.
コツ
STEP
THANKS. I FEEL A LITTLE BETTER NOW.
.....!

AH!
HUH?
WHAT'S WRONG?
キリ
ユ
SQUEEZE
NO!
DON'T TURN AROUND.
I WANT YOU ALL TO MY-SELF.

LOVE IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT
SUZUKA
1
COMING TO DVD JUNE 12, 2007
Pre-Order Your Vol. 1 Now
www.funimation.com/suzuka
BEST BUY
Based on the manga "SUZUKA" by Koji Seo originally serialized in the Weekly SHONEN MAGAZINE published by Kodansha Ltd.
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Kodansha

Pastel

by Toshihiko Kobayashi

I LOVE YUU

Poor 16-year-old Mugi Tadano is left heartbroken after his girlfriend moves away. A summer job at his friend Kazuki's beachside snack bar/hotel seems like the perfect way to get his mind off the breakup. Soon Kazuki sets Mugi up on a date with a girl named Yuu, who's supposed to be...well...a little less than perfect. But when Yuu arrives, she's not the monster that either of the boys had imagined. In fact, Yuu is about the cutest girl that Mugi has ever seen. But after Mugi accidentally walks in on Yuu while she's in the bath, Yuu is furious. When Mugi goes to apologize the next day, he learns that Yuu has left the island. Mugi vows to search high and low for her, but will he ever see the beautiful Yuu again?

Ages: 16+

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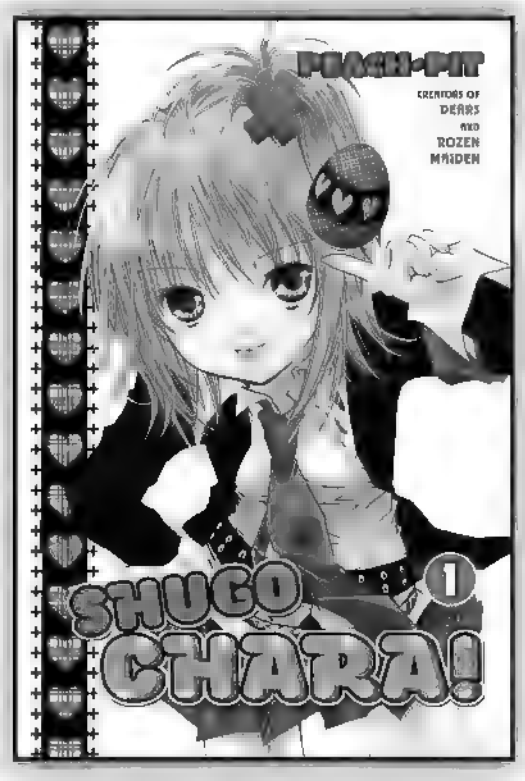
SHUGO CHARA!

PEACH-PIT

Creators of *Dears* and *Rozen Maiden*

Everybody at Seiyo Elementary thinks that stylish and super-cool Amu has it all. But nobody knows the *real* Amu, a shy girl who wishes she had the courage to truly be herself. Changing Amu's life is going to take more than wishes and dreams—it's going to take a little magic! One morning, Amu finds a surprise in her bed: three strange little eggs. Each egg contains a Guardian Character, an angel-like being who can give her the power to be someone new. With the help of her Guardian Characters, Amu is about to discover that her true self is even more amazing than she ever dreamed.



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Original Story by Fūtaro Yamada
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